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## Aspects of the Nebraska Question, 1852-1854

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**I**N a previous article on the motives of Stephen A. Douglas, emphasis was placed upon the fact that the issue of slavery was raised already, prior to the provision relating to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise incorporated into the Douglas bill of January, 1854. The problem is too complex to be handled within the scope of a magazine article, but an important aspect of it is presented here as related to the Nebraska delegate convention held at St. Joseph, Mo., January 9 and 10, 1854.

The interest of northwestern Missouri in the organization of the Indian country to the westward, which Douglas called Nebraska, was of long standing. It came to the point of crisis between 1852 and 1854.

The bill for the organization of Nebraska introduced into the short session of congress of 1852-1853, by Willard P. Hall, of St. Joseph, proposed to organize the territory without mention of the question of slavery. That bill passed the house of representatives but failed in the senate, apparently by a small majority.

But there is more to the question than met the eye. The Compromise of 1850 had been accepted by the majority of the congress and of the federal union as the final settlement of the slavery question, which would remove that "vexed question" from the floor of congress forever. The formula applied to the Mexican session, and to Texas, was the one that came to be called popular sovereignty, which meant, that local institutions were to be decided by the population occupying the territory, and congress would accept that decision without argument. Both political parties, in their platforms of 1852, had made acceptance of the Compromise Measures of 1850

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The material in this article is summarized from some parts of a book by the present author, *The Nebraska Question, 1852-1854*, to be issued in 1954.

a test of party loyalty, and candidates had generally been nominated and elected upon that pledge, or "loyalty oath." Northwestern Missouri, where Hall's bill originated, was so pledged, and proceeded to act upon that new proposition following the campaign. Hall's bill itself becomes intelligible only in that background.

The principles, as just explained, were not restricted to northwestern Missouri. The New York *Express* published an editorial on the subject, reprinted in the St. Joseph (Mo.) *Gazette*, March 9, 1853: "The day has gone by when Congress will look into the proposed institutions of any new State, further than to see if they are incompatible with the Federal Constitution."

This doctrine became the rallying cry for Nebraska during the summer of 1853—to ignore the Missouri Compromise and act upon the new dispensation of the Compromise Measures of 1850. Sen. David R. Atchison, of Missouri, challenged the procedure, not the objective, and insisted that the Missouri Compromise must be repealed outright as a condition of organizing Nebraska.

Northwestern Missouri, Whigs and Democrats, except the strictly Atchison following, rallied largely to the support of the Hall formula. Hall addressed a St. Joseph mass meeting, August 27, 1853, in which he reviewed the Nebraska question in a broad perspective. Resolutions were adopted. The discussion following this event crystallized into a plan for a delegate convention to meet at St. Joseph, on the Battle of New Orleans Day, January 8, 1854. As that date fell on Sunday, the day following was celebrated, with Nebraska participating. Delegates had been selected at mass meetings held in southwestern Iowa counties, and in Nebraska territory, as well as in the northwestern Missouri counties. Among the resolutions adopted by that convention, which apply specifically to this issue, are the following:

6. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of Congress as early as possible at its present session, to organize Nebraska into a territory, and thus give to her residents, travelers, traders and citizens, the protection of law, and the rights and privileges of a free peoples.

7. *Resolved*, That, we are utterly opposed to any re-agitation of that 'vexed question,' now happily at rest—and we 'will resist all attempts at renewing in Congress, or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempts may be made. [']

8. *Resolved*, That, we consider the agitation of the slavery question, in connection with the organization of Nebraska territory, dangerous to the peace of the country, fatal to the best interests of Nebraska itself, and even threatening the harmony, if not the perpetuity of the whole Union.

9. *Resolved*, That in organizing Nebraska Territory, all who are now or

who may hereafter settle there should be protected in all their rights, leaving questions of local policy to be settled by the citizens of the Territory, when they form a State Government.

12. *Resolved*, That all the settlers in Nebraska are entitled, of right, and should receive from the general government, *equal* protection, and *equal* pre-emption, graduation, or homestead gratuities as any have received, who have settled or shall hereafter settle, on any other portions belonging to the United States.<sup>1</sup>

The Nebraska Convention instructed a committee to arrange for the immediate publication of the proceedings, the resolutions, the letters of distinguished men addressed to the convention, an address to the public, and a memorial to congress. This was to have been done in pamphlet form to be broadcast to the whole Union. For a number of reasons, particularly financial, the plan was not carried out. Except the address to the public, all of the material was printed in the *St. Joseph Gazette* during the early months of 1854, but not soon enough to produce any effective impact upon the public mind. How much influence the proceedings wielded behind the scenes cannot be discussed here.

The first version of the Douglas Nebraska bill, reported January 4, 1854, was virtually the doctrine of the northwestern Missouri agitation, regardless of the influences which may have decided Douglas upon the particular language and theory involved. It was also the view of the *New York Express* already quoted in part. The revision made by Douglas under pressure of Dixon and Atchison, and represented in his revised bill of January 23, was a more explicit announcement that the Compromise Measures of 1850 had superseded the Missouri Compromise. The changes introduced on February 6, 7, 15, repealed the Missouri Compromise explicitly as of 1854 by using the words "inconsistent with" thus cutting through all the previous quibbling about language and procedure, but making no change in the basic assumptions that reach back to the Hall bill of 1852-1853. That many people had not so understood the purpose of the Hall bill, is quite another question.

The episode of the Jeremiah Clemens letter may help to explain other aspects of opinion. Formerly a senator from Alabama, Clemens was not then active politically, but answered on February 4, 1854, a letter from John Van Buren, of New York:

. . . I agree with you in most of its suggestions. The less that is said upon the subject of slavery the better it will be for all parties, and such I am sure is the general sentiment of the South. We want nothing but to be let alone. . . .

1. *St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette*, January 18, 1854.

All that I consider necessary in the Nebraska bill, was that it should be an exact copy of the New Mexico bill, except, of course, the name and description of boundaries.

Clemens then condemned the Douglas bill which announced that the Missouri Compromise was superseded:

. . . I think I can foresee the consequences. . . . A floodgate will be opened, and a torrent turned loose upon the country which will sweep away in its devastating course every vestige of the Compromise of 1850. I do not speak of its immediate effects—I look beyond. For the present it may be looked upon at the South as a boon, and by a portion of the North as a triumph over fanaticism. The word peace will be upon the lips of its advocates everywhere. . . . —but I greatly fear that they will soon find they have raised a spirit which will wing its way through storm and tempest to the funeral pyre of the Republic.<sup>2</sup>

Lucian J. Eastin, editor of the *St. Joseph Gazette*, endorsed the Clemens argument. He understood clearly what was being said because it was the standard argument of his area. Eastin had criticized the revised Douglas bill adversely also, but finally accepted it on the basis of the doctrine of the original proposition. In earlier discussions, the point was made repeatedly in northwestern Missouri that the decision of 1820 had been made on the basis of facts as of that year. Although disagreeing with that decision in principle, the Missouri Compromise was accepted in good faith, and no move should be made to repeal it. Nevertheless, if called upon to decide the question of slavery in Nebraska as an original proposition, as of the 1850's, Eastin would vote against the Missouri Compromise. It was on that basis that he had joined the fight against Atchison during 1853, at the same time that he insisted upon the right of the settlers in Nebraska to vote it a slave state and be admitted into the Union as a slave state, regardless of the Missouri Compromise restriction.

The doctrine of the original proposition justified by a new situation was the means of removing the dead hand of the past from decisions of the present, merely by ignoring that past. Now that repeal was actually being agitated, introduced into the scene by others, he regarded the matter of repeal itself as an original proposition to be settled on the basis of a new situation, facts existing in 1854, not facts existing in 1820.

It seems all but impossible for people captive to a century of antislavery-abolition propaganda to distinguish the separate issues as seen by these people of 1853 and 1854. The Missouri Compro-

2. Reprinted in the *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 1, 1854, and reprinted also widely in the Eastern newspapers.

mise of 1820 was itself one entity, decided as an original proposition, to meet a specific situation. It had served its purpose. The incident was closed. The generation of 1853 and 1854 had its own problems, and claimed the right to solve them in its own way, upon the basis of existing facts, and untrammelled by the decisions of a past generation in which it had not participated. The claim of the right of settlers to decide their own institutions under the doctrine of the Compromise Measures of 1850 was much more than a controversy over slavery, or over state rights versus centralization; it involved the basic issue of human culture—freedom of men to be let alone and to manage their own affairs, even freedom from the past, from decisions of the past in which they had not participated. The theoretical aspects appear clear and unanswerable. The conflict came in their application. Extreme abolitionists might have argued that humanity is the basic unit of application, and thus have justified interference with slavery in distant states and territories. However that might be, the Nebraska argument was grounded in geographical localism as the unit of decisions in applying the concept of the "consent of the governed," inherited from the Declaration of Independence.

An unidentified writer, "H," contributed an article to the *St. Joseph Gazette*, of February 22, 1854, in which he discussed the probabilities involved in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise:

Once it took half an age to settle and bring in a State. Now, a few months or a year or two at most, is the required time. Once, the man of business could give himself a year or two to close his business, select his 'choice site' and his new home. But how is it now? The few months delay, the necessary year or two, to wind up business, not only insures the loss of choice locations, but it gives him no voice in the constitutional fabric which is to regulate the future Institutions of the State. It is not necessary to show that Northern men, with small farms, or men engaged in business, which can be closed up in a few days have a decided advantage over a slave holding population. . . . Northern men like the ancient Hordes which overrun Europe, are emphatically the emigrating men of this age.

This writer argued further that the issue was not one of slave-holding men entering Nebraska north of the compromise line of 36° 30': "North of the compromise line there is but a strip of country that a slave holding population would have. It must and will be settled by northern men." What "H" was worrying about was that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise would be the signal for a rush of Northern men into Texas and the Southwest: . . . is it good policy for southern men to . . . unbar the last door and invite the eager land hunter of the north to plant his light foot there first?

South of 36 and 30 minutes is the territory through which some of our great national highways are to pass to the Pacific. Who are to construct these great thoroughfares? Who are to develop the vast mineral wealth of this region? Foreigners and northern men mainly. And will they not pour in one constant stream along these Rail-ways to find homes and fortunes. If so, it will not be difficult to tell whether the country will be a Pro or Anti-slavery one. What then is to be gained? Some think Kansas. But can we hope to gain Kansas? Where are the facts? If we take those Emigrants who are now lingering (and their name is legion) all along the Missouri River, ready, at a moment to step across, as a basis for calculation, we shall find that more than *two* out of *three* will vote for a free State. If we get the real sentiments of these Emigrants who will soon crowd our Rivers to find homes in Kansas, the same result will be seen. Or if we wait till the Pacific Railroad is located and the ten thousand voices speak from the extended line, no question but they will declare her a free State. What then I ask is to be gained? Absolutely *nothing*. While we lose much. When Missouri came in our wise men made the compromise, not to keep slaveholders from having equal rights with others, but to *point out a necessary terminus of Congressional interference*, on a vexed question.

One of the Whig candidates for congress from northwestern Missouri, John E. Pitt, was even more blunt. As late as May 17, 1854, he opposed, in a public address at St. Joseph, the organization of the Indian country. The newspaper paraphrase credited him with saying: ". . . So soon as that country is opened for settlement, it will be settled mostly by Yankees who will outstrip us in enterprise, and build railroads while we are talking about them." Referring to the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad, he declared "if Nebraska is now organized we would lose that road, it would go north of us to Council Bluffs."<sup>3</sup>

Admittedly these are only selected illustrations, but they are of fundamental importance and must serve only as a preview of a re-examination of the problem studied as a whole situation. If there was any reality in the aspirations of northwestern Missouri to make Nebraska a slave state under the Hall bill of 1852-1853, or a similar bill in 1853-1854 under the formula that it was being organized without mention of slavery; then certainly, the Douglas bill, in any of its several successive forms put the free states on notice about what was being undertaken. No clearer case can be found to illustrate how a genuine historical document, when interpreted literally and removed from its context, has been made to say just the opposite of its true intent and purpose. Instead of damning Douglas on the charge of betraying freedom, the free states should have honored him as a hero for putting them on notice about what

3. St. Joseph Gazette, May 24, 1854.

was to be attempted under subterfuge, after which congress was expected to admit Nebraska, the whole of it (prior to the division into Kansas and Nebraska) as a slave state. Of course, there is question whether there was any real possibility of either Nebraska prior to the division, or Kansas, being made a slave state in any case—railroads and “light-footed” men must be reckoned with—mechanical-power versus muscle-power had already tipped the scales in favor of freedom from chattel slavery. But there were other forms of freedom, the shapes of which were not so clear, that were yet to be won.

Capt. L. C. Easton's Report:

## Fort Laramie to Fort Leavenworth Via Republican River in 1849

EDITED BY MERRILL J. MATTES

### INTRODUCTION

WHO first explored the length of the Republican river? Pike, Fremont, and quite possibly others traveled sections of the stream earlier, but it appears that the first known complete exploration of the main channel of Republican river was undertaken in 1849 by an expedition led by an officer of the Quartermaster Department of the United States Army. After assisting in the establishment of a new military station at Fort Laramie, outpost on the great Platte route to Oregon and California, Capt. L. C. Easton was assigned the task of exploring the Republican river as an alternate supply route between that post and Fort Leavenworth on the Kansas border, then the base for all military operations on the Plains.

The discovery of the Easton journal in the War Department Records of the National Archives was a coincidental by-product of two distinct historical research programs of the National Park Service, an agency of the U. S. Department of the Interior. A national monument since 1938, Fort Laramie has long been the subject of intensive archival study by Service historians. In 1946 the Region Two office of the Service, in Omaha, began a systematic survey of historic sites in proposed Missouri river basin reservoir areas. Many of these water control projects are in the Republican river basin. The two lines of inquiry converged in the documentary records relating to early frontier military posts.

The tongue of land at the junction of the North Platte and Laramie rivers, in Goshen county, Wyoming, has been a concentration point for many significant events in the history of the trans-Mississippi frontier.<sup>1</sup> There has been a "Fort Laramie" here ever since 1834. In that year the fur traders, William Sublette and Robert Campbell, erected a log-stockaded post dubbed by them Fort Wil-

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1. Note the fitting subtitle of the standard reference on the subject: LeRoy R. Hafen and Francis Marion Young, *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890* (Glendale, 1938).



liam, more commonly called by trappers, missionaries, and early travelers "the fort on the Laramie." In 1841 this was replaced by an adobe-walled establishment of the American Fur Company christened Fort John, but still "Fort Laramie" to thousands of emigrants to Oregon and Utah, to the Donner party, to Francis Parkman, and finally to worried government officials.

Even before the gold fever, with increasing numbers of its citizens migrating westward across the hostile plains, it was perhaps inevitable that the federal government would set up a chain of military posts along the Great Platte route, and the idea had been broached at various times by such respected authorities as Fremont, Parkman, and Fitzpatrick. It was officially set in motion by President Polk in a message to congress in 1845, which resulted in the enactment, on May 19, 1846, of "an act to provide for raising a regiment of Mounted Riflemen, and for establishing military stations on the route to Oregon."<sup>2</sup> The Mexican War delayed action until 1848, when Fort Kearny, the first military post on the trail, was established on the Lower Platte. Then destiny pointed its finger at "Fort John on the Laramie."

By order of Gen. D. E. Twiggs, dated April 9, Maj. W. F. Sander-son, mounted riflemen, was instructed to leave Fort Leavenworth by May 10 with Company E "to locate a post in the vicinity of the Laramie." Hard on the heels of an army of covered wagon emigrants, the troops arrived at the scene on June 16. On the 26th of that month Lt. Daniel P. Woodbury successfully completed negotiations with "Bruce Husbands acting as agent and attorney for Pierre Choteau Jr. & Company" for the purchase of the post for \$4,000.<sup>3</sup> After a hasty inspection of the dilapidated adobe post and a reconnaissance of the countryside, Major Sanderson set the troop to erecting new quarters.

On July 26 the small garrison of 58 men and 5 officers was augmented by Company C, mounted riflemen, 2 officers and 60 men, under Capt. Benjamin S. Roberts. On August 12 Company G, 6th infantry, composed of 2 officers and 33 men, brought in a train of wagons from Fort Leavenworth. This completed the Fort Laramie garrison of 1849.<sup>4</sup>

Accompanying this last contingent was Col. Aeneas Mackay, sent by headquarters to inspect the new post. In a report of July 31 to

2. J. D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (1905), v. 4, p. 396.

3. "Fort Laramie Microfilm Document No. 27," War Records Office, National Archives.

4. Merrill J. Mattes, *Fort Laramie and the Forty-Niners* (Rocky Mountain Nature Association, Estes Park, Colo., 1949).

Thomas Jesup, quartermaster general, he describes the deplorable condition of the adobe works and the new building program, praises the hitherto unappreciated "advantages of this station," and then writes:

. . . having arrived at the Termination of our Route, to take all the advantage possible of our retrograde movement, I have ordered Captain Easton with a portion of our party to return to Ft. Leav by the way of the Republican Fork and Kansas River . . . to make a critical examination of it. . . . For myself I prefer to return by the way of Ft. Pierre and the Missouri River to Ft. Leavenworth.<sup>5</sup>

Analysis of the Easton journal, utilizing base maps of the U. S. Geological survey, reveals that the amateur explorer took a rather devious route to reach the headwaters of the Republican. Dropping southward from Fort Laramie to Lodgepole creek, at a point east of present Cheyenne, Wyo., Easton followed this directional stream only briefly before dropping southward again, crossing the South Platte near present Sterling, Colo., and then continuing southeasterly until bumping into the Arickaree fork of the North Republican. During the rest of the journey the party closely followed the main course of the Republican to its junction with the Smoky Hill.

Captain Easton's instructions were to make "an examination of the country with a view of establishing a better route from the Missouri River to Fort Laramie, or a more direct or a better one, for the emigrants to Oregon." He had the honesty to make two unequivocal admissions upon his return—first, he committed errors of judgment which unduly lengthened his journey; second, he discovered that the Republican river route offered no weighty advantages over the Platte route, while it did offer some great disadvantages. Either point was enough to deprive the captain of a reputation as a first-class explorer!

The Great Platte road was the inevitable route to Oregon, California, and Utah for one overwhelming reason. It went in exactly the right direction! Even after Colorado came into the emigrant picture in the late 1850's, and Missouri and Kansas communities were definitely interested in a more direct road westward, the Platte-South Platte remained a heavy favorite over the Republican or the Smoky Hill. These latter streams simply dried up and disappeared long before the traveler reached the mountains which were his destination. The Republican river not only disappeared too soon, requiring a long "dry run" overland to South Platte, it

5. "Fort Laramie Microfilm Document No. 11," War Department Records, National Archives. On his journey to Fort Pierre (opposite present Pierre, S. Dak.) Colonel Mackay was accompanied by an escort of ten riflemen commanded by Capt. Stewart Van Vliet.

was bent like an oxbow, making for a circuitous route.<sup>6</sup> Although his destination was southeast of Fort Laramie, Captain Easton spent many days traveling in a northeasterly direction. His route, totaling over 800 miles, should not have been more than 700 miles.

A better case for the Republican might have been made if, instead of trying to negotiate its uppermost headwaters, Easton had combined the best directional features of the Republican and Platte, that is, descend the North Platte from Fort Laramie to Fort Kearny, and then cross overland to the Republican in the vicinity of Franklin county, Nebraska, a distance of merely 40 miles. Or an overland crossing could have been made almost anywhere along the stretch of over 100 miles that the two large rivers closely parallel each other. The fact remains, however, that this not unreasonable route was never used by emigrants of record. The strip between the Platte and Republican rivers was traversed frequently by military parties operating between Fort Riley and Fort Kearny during the 1850's, and patrolling out of Fort Kearny and Fort Cottonwood (McPherson) during the Indian wars of the 1860's, but these were local actions.<sup>7</sup> The crossing between the two rivers as a factor in transcontinental travel never materialized.

Two other exploring expeditions involving the Upper Republican, falling within a seven year radius of 1849, will stand brief comparison.

On his westward journey of 1843 Captain Fremont started to ascend the Republican but became impatient with its northerly course. From "Big Timber," roughly at the bend near present Concordia, he chose to head directly westward, following for a while the Solomon and the North fork of the Solomon. Rather than descend into the valley of the Republican, he kept up the parallel valleys of Prairie Dog, Sappa, and Beaver creeks, then crossed the Republican near present Benkelman, at the junction of the North and South forks. From this point he veered in a west-northwest course to reach the South Platte near present Fort Morgan, proceeding then to Fort St. Vrain, not far from present Greeley, Colo.<sup>8</sup> Fremont's slower supply train, under the veteran guide Thomas

6. See LeRoy R. Hafen, *Overland Routes to the Gold Fields* . . . (Glendale, 1942). The famed but short-lived Leavenworth and Pikes Peak Express touched the main course of the Republican river only briefly near the forks at Benkelman, Neb. See map with George A. Root and Russell K. Hickman, "Pike's Peak Express Companies," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 13 (November, 1944), facing p. 240.

7. *War of the Rebellion*, Series 1, v. 48, pt. 1, pp. 279-284, 354-355. See, also, "Outline Map Indicating Line of March of Scouting Parties in the Department of the Platte in 1868 and 1869," War Department Records, National Archives.

8. Bvt. Capt. J. C. Fremont, *Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843-44* (Washington, 1845), pp. 107-113.

Fitzpatrick, appears to have approximated this same course.<sup>9</sup> Thus, Fremont, though first to the headwaters, in no way robbed Easton of the hitherto unpublicized distinction of being first to explore the length of the Republican.

In 1856 Lt. Francis T. Bryan, Corps of Topographical Engineers, followed down the course of the Republican practically in Captain Easton's footsteps, except for the approach to the headwaters. Bryan headed an expedition to survey a practical route from "Fort Riley to Bridger's Pass." The party proceeded up the Republican to the bend just across the present Nebraska line, then went overland to Fort Kearny on the Platte, thence up the Platte, the South Platte, Lodgepole creek, and across the Medicine Bow Range to their objective. The return journey was via the Cache la Poudre and the South Platte to a point near present Fort Morgan, thence southwesterly to "Rock Creek, a tributary of the Arickaree fork of the Republican," actually, it seems, the North fork, near Wray, Colo. Bryan followed the south or right bank of the Republican to a point near present McCook, Neb., then crossed over to the left bank, rejoining his outgoing trail near present Superior, Neb. Like Easton, Bryan felt that the valley of the Republican had the advantage of virgin grass and timber, but everything considered, "the route followed on the outward journey was the most advantageous."<sup>10</sup> There is no evidence, however, that Lieutenant Bryan of the Topographical Engineers was in any way acquainted with the earlier expedition of the Quartermaster Department.

There remains a brief biographical examination of our explorer and his associates. Langdon C. Easton, a native Missourian, ranked 22d in the West Point graduating class of 1838. He served in the Florida War of 1838-1842, and was stationed at Fort Towson, Indian territory, until 1846. He was on quartermaster duty at Fort Leavenworth from 1847 to 1849, and became chief quartermaster, Department of New Mexico, in 1850. In 1852 he returned to duty at Fort Leavenworth, becoming a member of the board of officers who selected the site of Fort Riley in 1852. He returned to New Mexico until 1858. During the rebellion of the seceding states, as staff major, he was successively in charge of the quartermaster depot

9. Charles H. Carey, editor, *The Journals of Theodore Talbot, 1843 and 1849-'52* (Metropolitan Press, Portland, Ore., 1931).

10. W. Turrentine Jackson, "The Army Engineers as Road Surveyors and Builders in Kansas and Nebraska, 1854-1858," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 17 (February, 1949), pp. 44-51; G. K. Warren, "Memoir to Accompany the Map of the Territory of the United States From the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean," v. 11, *Reports of Explorations and Surveys . . . for a Railroad From the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean* (Washington, 1861), p. 84.

at Fort Leavenworth, chief quartermaster of the Army of the Cumberland in the field, and chief quartermaster of the armies commanded by General Sherman. In September, 1864, he was brevetted brigadier general "for distinguished . . . services in the . . . campaign of Atlanta, Ga."; on March 13, 1865, he became brevet major general "for meritorious services during the rebellion." After many more years of service, during which he attained the rank of full colonel and assistant quartermaster general, Easton retired in 1881. He died in New York City, April 29, 1884, aged 70.<sup>11</sup>

Lt. N. George Evans, who accompanied Captain Easton on this journey, ranked 36th in the West Point class of 1848. After "frontier duty at Ft. Leavenworth" and an "expedition to the Rocky Mountains" in 1849, Evans campaigned extensively in the Southwest, attaining the rank of captain with the 2d cavalry before resigning, February 27, 1861, to join in the rebellion against the United States.<sup>12</sup>

Col. Aeneas Mackay, who launched Easton on his eastward journey, was not a West Point graduate, but he had a real army career. After valiant service in the War of 1812 as 1st lieutenant of ordnance, he remained with the regular army, rising to the rank of colonel in the quartermaster corps on May 30, 1848, "for meritorious service in performing his duties in prosecuting the war with Mexico." He died May 23, 1850, just a few months after dispatching Easton homeward and himself making a simultaneous journey to Fort Pierre.<sup>13</sup>

#### CAPTAIN EASTON'S REPORT

ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER'S OFFICE

FORT LEAVENWORTH

12TH OCTOBER 1849.

SIR:

In obedience to your instructions received at Fort Laramie on the 1st of August last, to proceed from that Post to Fort Leavenworth by way of the Republican Fork<sup>14</sup> and the Kansas Rivers, making an examination of the Country with a view of establishing a better route from the Missouri River to Fort Laramie, or a more direct or a better one, for the Emigrants to Oregon. I have the honor to submit the following report.

11. Bvt. Maj. Gen. George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy, 1802-1890* (Boston, 1891), v. 1, pp. 710, 711.

12. *Ibid.*, v. 2, pp. 365, 366.

13. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903* (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1903), v. 1, p. 670.

14. A satisfying review of "Republican River" etymology and geography is given by George A. Root in "Ferries in Kansas," Part 4, *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 3 (August, 1934), pp. 246, 247.

My party for this expedition consisted of Lieut. N. G. Evans 1st Dragoons<sup>15</sup> and of ten Dragoons, as an Escort, Dr. Parks of Boston (whose curiosity to see the Country induced him to accompany the expedition), your Son Thomas, 13 years of Age (who accompanied me for the benefit of his mind and body), Joseph Hunoit as Guide, ten Teamsters and Extra hands employed in the Quartermaster's Department, and two Servants.

The means of transportation (which was more than the party required, being return teams to Leavenworth, which it was thought necessary for me to conduct back) consisted of four six-mule Teams, and one light Waggon drawn by four Mules— The Dragoons were mounted on indifferent Horses, being the same they had ridden from Fort Leavenworth, and on leaving Laramie they were low in flesh, and in a weak condition— The whole party was well armed. We left Fort Laramie on the 2nd of August 1849, with 45 Days rations—

I shall in making this report copy from my Journal, such portions of it as relate to, or has any bearing on, the object in view; believing that such a course will better enable you to judge of the nature of the Country.

AUGUST 2ND In our first day's march we crossed the Laramie River immediately at Fort Laramie, travelling from it 9 Miles in E. S. E. course, to a grove of Cherry Bushes, on a small spring branch, called by our Guide "Cherry Creek."<sup>16</sup> Our road to day has been a very good one over a rolling Prairie— Grass poor and no Wood until we reached Cherry Creek, where we found a few scattering Trees— On examination I found, that the Rifle Cartridges I had obtained at Laramie were damaged and I sent a man back to the Fort to procure a better supply— These Cartridges were damaged in the manufacture, by having too much oil on the Cloth or Patching which covers the Ball, damaging one-fourth of the Powder of each Cartridge—

AUGUST 3RD Left Camp late this Morning, being detained awaiting the arrival of our Messenger dispatched for Cartridges— Direction to day E. S. E. 15 Miles, to a small spring branch, called by

15. The "United States Regiment of Dragoons" was organized by the act of congress approved March 2, 1833, becoming the "First Regiment of Dragoons" when the Second dragoons were raised in 1836. Its designation was changed to "First Regiment of Cavalry" by the Act of August 3, 1861.—Theo. F. Rodenbough and Wm. L. Haskin, editors, *The Army of the United States, 1789-1896* (New York, 1896), p. 153.

16. This same Cherry creek is identified on a map of Goshen county, Wyoming, issued by the Wyoming State Highway Department, 1940. Easton's given compass courses are frequently inexplicable. In this instance an "ESE" course would have taken him downstream along the North Platte. Actually, he appears to have gone SSE.

our Guide "Box Elder Creek"<sup>17</sup>— An abundance of this Wood on the branch and good Grass for our Animals— Two miles from our last Camp we passed over a high ridge, and descended again into a dry sandy valley— This ridge runs off to the right as far as the eye could reach, and connects on the West side of our road with a range of Bluffs, composed of Marl and earthy Limestone— This Bluff continued on our right the balance of our march to day, at a distance of from 3 to 5 Miles from the road— Road good— No Wood and very poor Grass, from Cherry Creek to this encampment—

AUGUST 4TH Course as yesterday E. S. E. marched 33 Miles and encamped at Horse Creek;<sup>18</sup> which at the point we crossed it is a fine little Stream six or seven feet wide, with excellent Grass in its valley and an abundance of Wood— The Bluffs referred to yesterday, continue and run nearly paralled to our road to day for 7 Miles from Camp, when they sweep around and run off to the East, and appear to terminate on Horse Creek— We crossed these Bluffs by a narrow gap near where they change their direction East— The Arc, formed by the ridge and bluffs referred to yesterday and to day, encloses a basin which has received the name of "Godion's Hollow," [?] as our Guide informs us— We found a cool spring branch a few miles before entering the Gap, and another four Miles on this side of it (which runs into Horse Creek)<sup>19</sup>— On the latter we found a large Sioux Village, Whirlwind their principal Chief, with a number of his people who came out to meet us, were anxious that we should understand that they were our friends<sup>20</sup>— Some of the Indians, to impress us more fully with the belief, even assisted our men in getting out of the Creek, a Waggon that had stalled in it. I regretted to learn that the Cholera was raging in this village, and had carried off a large number of the Tribe— Road good Except a steep hill ascending the Bluffs— Wood and Grass, good and plentiful on the Creeks, but not found in the intervals during the days march—

17. The name of this creek appears also on a modern county road map. It effects a junction with Cherry creek before flowing into North Platte river opposite present Torrington, Wyo. This camp would be below the junction, near present Veteran, Wyo.

18. Horse creek is a more sizable tributary of the North Platte. At its mouth in 1851 was held the famous Fort Laramie Treaty Council, engineered by Father DeSmet.

19. This camp and crossing of Horse creek was apparently at present LaGrange, Wyo. The two walls of the gap referred to are identified today as Bear Mountain and 66 Mountain. The enclosed basin and present Goshen county are named for an obscure French trapper named "Goche," a companion of Jacques La Ramie, who was reputedly in this area in the 1820's.—Grant L. Shumway, *The History of Western Nebraska* (Lincoln, 1921).

20. Whirlwind figured in Francis Parkman's wanderings of 1846 in the Fort Laramie neighborhood. See Mason Wade, editor, *The Journals of Francis Parkman* (New York, 1947), v. 2, pp. 397, et. seq.

AUGUST 5TH—Sunday.— In consequence of the fatigued condition of our Animals, from the long march of yesterday, we marched but 3 Miles in a S. W. course, for the purpose of a change of Grass, and encamped on a branch of the same Creek <sup>21</sup>— Three miles from to day's Camp, East, are several very fine Springs, of which I noticed one particularly of very fine Water— Immediately on these Spring branches is a narrow strip of good Grass but no Wood— Road good— One of the Teamsters to day was thrown from his Saddle Mule and badly hurt— Private Covey [?] of the Dragoons, after cutting a Rattle snake in two pieces with his Sabre, very foolishly picked up the head part about nine inches in length, and while examining it was bitten on the Thumb— Having, unfortunately, no Ammonia among our Medicines, we resorted to our Guide's prescription— Gun powder which was applied in the following manner— The Thumb was scarrified about the wound with a pocket knife, and the wound then covered with as much powder as would lie on it, which was exploded with a coal of fire— Covey [?] was ill for 12 Hours, constantly vomitting, and his Arm had swollen to the Shoulder, after which time, he became better and in 10 days was again on duty.

AUGUST 6TH Marched to day 23 Miles S. S. W. and encamped on Pole Creek <sup>22</sup>— Three Miles from last Camp we found a similar spring to the one we saw yesterday, with good Grass in the little valley through which it runs.— Ascending from this valley we had an elevated road of dry table land, uninterrupted until we reached Pole Creek.— No good Grass to day; on the plain is a growth of indifferent Buffalo grass— Good Grass on this Creek but no Wood seen during the day— Road remarkably good— On this Creek the Water made it's appearance at intervals then sinking and disappearing beneath it's sandy bottom and again becoming visible for a few hundred yards.— While marching on the elevated plain, the Black Hills,<sup>23</sup> white with Snow, could be seen very distinctly in the distance, to our right—

AUGUST 7TH From Fort Laramie to Pole Creek we had travelled on a indistinct Waggon trail, made by some Traders <sup>24</sup>— From

21. Bear creek?

22. Lodgepole creek. Like Horse creek, it heads in the Medicine Bow Mountains. Lodgepole parallels U. S. Highway 30 and the Union Pacific railroad. This camp was approximately 20 miles east of present Cheyenne.

23. Frequent reference to the "Black Hills" in Western journals, i. e., Parkman's *Oregon Trail*, confuses those who know only of the Black Hills, in present South Dakota. The term was applied in early days to Laramie Peak, west of Fort Laramie, and apparently also, as in this instance, to the Medicine Bow Mountains.

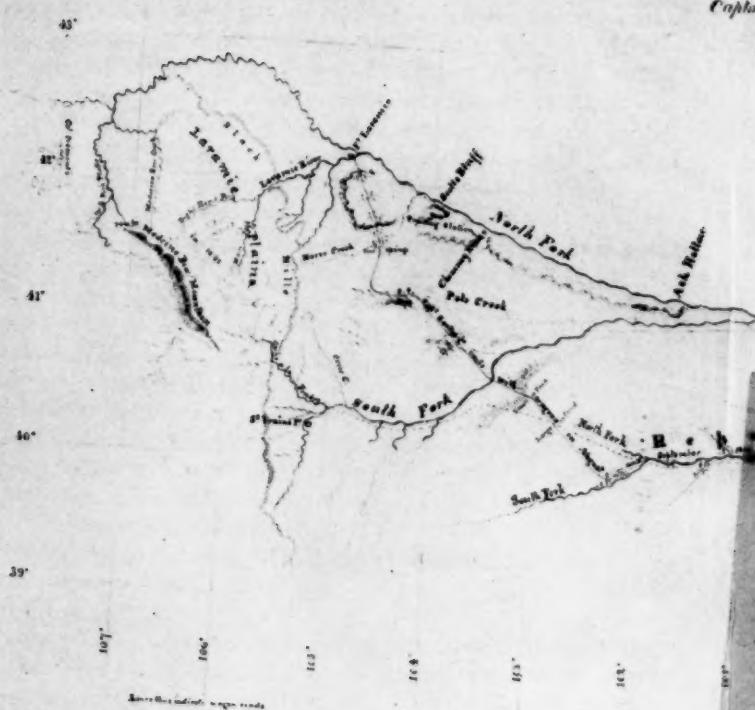
24. For many years prior to 1849 there was commercial intercourse between Fort Laramie, the several trading posts on the Upper South Platte, and Bent's Fort on the Arkansas.



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**NOTE.**  
 This is a sketch of my map  
 of the river and creek and the  
 leading from the latter to the  
 the other. This is a sketch of

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
 DIVISION OF THE GPO  
 WASHINGTON, D. C.

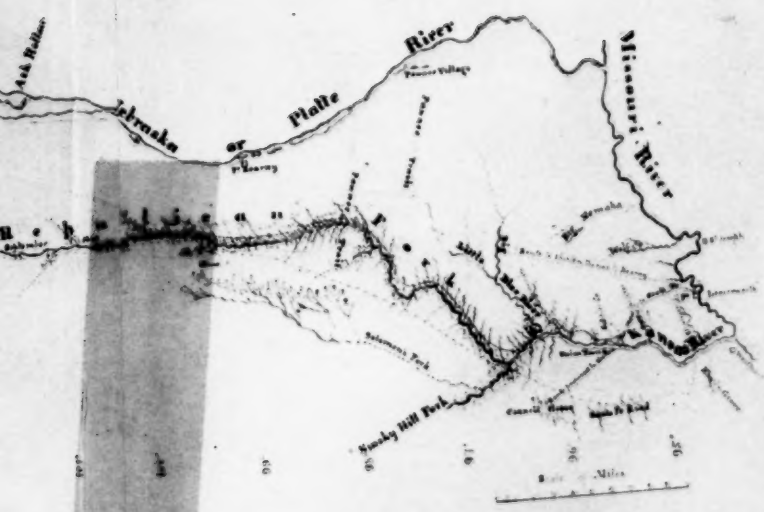


UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
 1950

V. P.

OTHER ROUTES FROM  
Fort Laramie to Leavenworth by  
Captain Easton

18



**NOTE.**

A description of the routes from Fort Laramie to Leavenworth, and the route to the west from the latter place to the Missouri River, as far as they were taken by the expedition.

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this point I had determined to take the most direct and shortest route (S. E.) for the Republican Fork, but the Guide insisted that to follow Pole Creek, was the best and nearest route to the South Fork of the Platte, which we, of course, had to cross, and as he also represented that we might suffer for want of Water, by crossing from one Stream to the other, I concluded to follow the Creek to the Platte, provided it should take a course near that I wished to pursue—. Pursuant to this determination, we continued down Pole Creek, 22 Miles due East, again pitching our Tents on it's banks. The Grass on the whole of our march to day has been very fine and the road excellent— Fourteen Miles from our last Camp we came to a high Bluff of soft earthy Limestone, where a fork of the Creek comes in from the S. W.<sup>25</sup>— At the foot of this Bluff is a good Spring— A great plenty of Wood in the Bluffs but we have seen none other on to day's march.

AUGUST 8TH After travelling down the Creek 10 Miles, finding it's course continued East, I determined to leave it and strike S. E. (pursuing which course for [?] miles we reached the South [?] fork of Platte)<sup>26</sup> After leaving Pole Creek we marched 7 Miles and encamped on a small pond of bad water, with but poor grass for our Animals, indeed it has been but indifferent since leaving the superior grass on the stream— Saw to day a small herd of Buffalo, our Guide killed a young Bull, also an Antelope, this is the first Game we have killed since leaving Larmie. Game has hitherto been scarce.

AUGUST 9TH Our direction to day was S. E.— After marching 17 Miles over a high, arid plain, we descended by a long steep hill, into a large valley, the plain from which we had just descended, continuing on our right into a long point which terminates with a high Bluff of Stone— Under this Bluff we were fortunate in finding a Spring, as our Animals were suffering for want of Water— Continuing our March over a level plain for 8 Miles through the Valley, we encamped on a little Creek running East, the water of which had the muddy appearance of the Platte River<sup>27</sup>— Looking back from our Camp, we could see that the valley we came over to day, was formed by the Hills on the North side of the Creek, taking a

25. This would be the bluffs which gave their name to present Pine Bluffs, Wyo., opposite the mouth of Muddy creek. Just east of here is the present Nebraska boundary.

26. Easton should have followed the advice of his guide, to follow "Pole Creek" to its junction with the Platte. This would have ensured a much more direct route to his destination.

27. Probably Rush creek, a tributary of the South Platte in the northeast corner of Weld county, Colorado.

large circuit from it and returning again some 8 or 10 Miles below— Rising from the plain of this valley, were several hills of an oblong shape, o'er which were tumbled in great confusion, as if by some strange freak of nature, large blocks of Stone of quite regular shape, and which gave the Hills quite a singular and striking appearance— This Evening a party of 18 Cheyennes came to our Camp— As this tribe had annoyed us on our March from Kearny to Laramie, by following and hanging about our Waggons and Tents, seeking an opportunity to steal; we determined not to let more than two of them come into our Camp at one time— The party accordingly was halted 50 yards from our Camp, and the Guide sent to invite two of them in, which invitation they accepted, and remained with us some time— This arrangement, not exactly suiting their views, depriving them as it did of all opportunity of enriching themselves at our expense, (for which purpose they had in all probability paid us a visit from their village about 3 Miles distant,) two of their party attempted to force their way by our Sentinel.— Being prepared for, and anticipating, something of this kind, Lieut Evans very promptly drew our party up in line, and intimated to the Indians the propriety of their immediate absence; adopting the sage suggestion, the whole party (with one exception) mounted their horses and forthwith left us.— One of the Indians who had been frustrated in his attempt to pass the Guard, chose to remain about some fifty yards from our encampment, long after the others had left, I presume as an evidence that he was not alarmed.

We have found patches of good Grass during our march through the valley and have an excellent quality of Grass at this Camp, but there is none fit for grazing on the high plain we passed over— Road fine but no Wood during the whole day's march.

AUGUST 10. We continued our S. E. course to day 25 Miles, over a high and dry plain, at the termination of which distance, we came to the South Fork of Platte, which we crossed; and encamped on the South side of it <sup>28</sup>— There is no Timber growing on the Platte where we crossed it, but we found an abundance of drift Wood, and superior Grass— We had neither Wood or Water and but miserable Grass from our last encampment to the South Fork.—

AUGUST 11TH Taking an E. S. E course 22 Miles, we encamped to day on a small pond, with wretched Water and bad Grass— For five Miles after leaving our Camp this morning we had a heavy road over hills of deep sand, after which we ascended to an elevated,

28. In the vicinity of present Sterling, Colo.

level, barren plain, which continued until we encamped— With the exception of the 5 miles referred to, our road was most excellent, but no wood, no Grass, and no water on the whole route.

AUGUST 12TH— I had intended to keep an E S. E direction, after leaving the Platte River, until I reached the Republican Fork, but the plain on which we were travelling was a high dry one, and so destitute of everything save miserable Buffalo grass, that I was fearful our Animals might suffer for the want of water and Grass.— I therefore determined on leaving Camp this morning to change our course to S. E. which I believed to be the most direct one to the Republican Fork<sup>29</sup>— We marched in this direction 17 Miles over the same barren plain of yesterday, when we were much gratified to reach a very large pond, or lake, of good water, around which our poor Animals, which had had but little to eat the night before, found excellent grazing— To the West of our encampment were several of these ponds, or small lakes, our guide spoke of many of them between the mouth of Pole Creek and the Republican, and Col Fremont mentions several ponds of this description, on his route from the latter stream to the Platte<sup>30</sup>— I am induced to believe that there are a number of these lakes of good water between the two Rivers, and that by winding the road from the one to the other, an abundance of Water can be procured at convenient distances.— Around these Lakes is fine Grass— Our road to day was good— No Wood

AUGUST 13TH Course to day 27 Miles S. E.— Encampment on a Pond, in which we found but very little muddy water, remaining in the tracks made by Buffalo in passing through— We were agreeably surprised in discovering fine Grass in some low ground, near the Camp— No water on our March except in one small hole, some 15 Miles from last encampment— Fine road today, but no wood or Grass between our last Camp and this.

AUGUST 14TH Continued our march S. E. 20 Miles over the same dry, barren plain as on the 12th and 13th when we came to a hill overlooking the fine broad valley of the Republican Fork,<sup>31</sup> with the River meandering through it, near a cluster of Trees, which afforded us the prospect of an abundance of Wood—

We had been four days without seeing a Stream of Water or a

29. Here Easton made another mistake. His original course would have brought him onto the headwaters of Frenchman's fork, or, missing that, the head of the North fork of the Republican near present Wray, Colo. Instead, by dropping south he encountered no sizable stream until he came to the Arickaree fork, which required that he then detour northeastward.

30. In present northern Yuma county, Colorado.

31. Actually, Arickaree fork.

stick of Timber, and suddenly coming on both, put the whole party in good spirits, heightened by a burst of laughter at the irresistible expression of an Irishman, who with evident earnestness and great joy exclaimed "*Be Jesus* we're in sight of land again."— We encamped on excellent grass near the Timber on the Bank of the Stream— From this point to the Platte, the route we travelled is 86 Miles, on which there is no Timber, no running Water, and no Grass except at the Lakes, abefore described— From one bank to the other the Republican at this point is about 50 feet wide, it is very low and but a small stream of water was winding it's way along it's sandy bed—

AUGUST 15 Route down the valley of the Republican Fork E. N. E. 18 Miles, and we encamped on it's Banks— Twelve Miles from our last Camp we crossed a small Creek running into the River, on the North side and which was well timbered so far as we could see up it— Abundance of Wood, fine Grass, and an excellent Road during the whole route.<sup>32</sup>

AUGUST 16 Continued down the valley 12 Miles N. E. and 7 Miles East and encamped on the South side of the River— At the point where the River changes it's direction East, on the day's march, it forms a junction with a stream equal in size to itself, coming from the N. W. and which for convenience of reference, I shall call the North Fork of the Republican— If this route should be travelled to the South Pass the road should follow this fork to it's head before crossing to the Platte <sup>33</sup>—

A good supply of drift Wood to day, grass and road remarkably fine— To day we entered the Buffalo range, which extends from the Mouth of the North Fork, 160 Miles down the Republican— The Country on either side of the River was literally covered with these Animals— During our march of Seven days we were never out of sight of them, except when the darkness of Night, veiled them from our view, and even then we were constantly reminded of their close proximity, and vast numbers, by the continued bel-  
lowing of the Bulls—

AUGUST 17<sup>TH</sup> Encamped on the Banks of the stream, having marched 19 Miles down it's valley— No Wood to day, but a fine road, and a super abundance of nutritious grass— On a small tributary Creek from the S. W, which joins the River a short dis-

32. Camp on Arickaree fork near the present Kansas state boundary. En route, Easton passed the site of the future (1868) Beecher Island Battle.

33 This was the true North fork. Easton here recognizes his directional mistake. The camp near present Haigler, Neb., was reached after crossing the extreme northeastern corner of Kansas.



tance below our Camp, is a large quantity of Timber— Our direction to day has been East—

AUGUST 18TH & 19TH Continued our March down the valley, and encamped on the 19th on a small Island in the River, on which was a flourishing growth of large Cotton Wood Timber— On this Island we found a log pen, supposed to have been built by some tribe of Indians for defence<sup>34</sup>— On our route 7 Miles below our Camp of the 17th is a small stream of fine, clear water, entering the River from the N. W. on which we found large quantities of delicious plums— The grass during these two days march has been indifferent generally, in consequence of this portion of the valley being much frequented by immense herds of Buffalo, which have eaten it out or trampled it down, from which causes the grazing is not good— Nevertheless there was no difficulty in finding sufficient good grass for our Animals— Wood in abundance these two days— Our direction has been East by North over a good road.

AUGUST 20TH Course E by N, 24 Miles down the valley to day— We pitched our Tents on the River Bank<sup>35</sup>— Twelve Miles from our last Camp a little Creek enters the River from the North and near this Camp another small stream joins it from the South side— An abundant supply of Wood and good road and Grass to day

AUGUST 21ST Followed the Stream 18 Miles and encamped on a small Spring branch— Four Miles above this evening's camp, a large tributary flows into the river from the N. W.<sup>36</sup>— Our Guide informs me that this Stream leads [?] within 45 Miles of the Platte, and that Lakes are to be found between it's source and that River— This would make another good crossing from the Republican to the Platte River— As I shall not probably hereafter mention Wood or Grass, I will here state that there was an abundance of the former, both on this and the Kansas Rivers, without an interval of more than half-a-mile, from hence to the Missouri— And of the latter we found the greatest abundance of an excellent quality, back in the valley of the Republican, and the vallies of all the small tributaries we crossed, during the whole of our march from this point until we arrived at Fort Leavenworth.

The Republican here has grown to be a stream, 30 Yards wide

34. This camp would be just west of present Trenton, Neb., near new Culbertson Dam. At approximately this same site appears "Big Timbers, Site of Military Post," on the General Land Office survey map of 1872, Sec. 4, T 2 N, R 33 W, 6th P. M. This post was related to the Indian wars of the late 1860's. "Big Timbers" here is not to be confused with Fremont's "Big Timber" near present Concordia, Kan., or the "Big Timbers" of the Santa Fe trail.

35. In the neighborhood of present McCook, Neb. Frenchman (earlier "Whiteman") creek comes in from the northwest, Driftwood creek from the south.

36. Red Willow creek.

and four feet deep— Hence to the Mouth of the Republican Fork there are such as large number of small branches emptying into it, I shall mention only the principal ones, referring you to the accompanying Map for information relative to the position of the others— Course to day E by N— Road good.

AUGUST 22ND Continuing our Course in the River valley, E by N, 15 Miles, we halted at a small Creek much swollen by recent heavy rains— As the water was falling rapidly we did not attempt to cross it but encamped on it's banks<sup>37</sup>— Creeks having now become numerous, and our progress consequently, very slow, I was almost induced to leave the River, and take the ridges some 8 or 10 Miles from it, in order to head many of the Creeks and cross the others near their sources— But as little was known relative to the Republican Fork, and as it is laid down on existing Maps, merely by an imaginary line, I was anxious to examine it practically and fix it's direction—

Our detention in crossing the Small Creeks was caused by the necessity of cutting the Banks down— The bottoms generally are hard and with little labor a fine road can be made.

AUGUST 23RD Marched down the valley of the River 14 Miles, direction E by N— We crossed a stream to day on which there was a number of Elm Trees<sup>38</sup>— Saw Three Elk to day— Passed a Grove of Plum Trees, from which our party gathered large quantities of the finest wild fruit I ever saw— The only difficulties on the road, were the crossings of some small Streams— the Banks of these streams generally, are not very high and are soon cut down, many of them we crossed without labor except cutting the brush out of the way— With but few exceptions the only difficulties on our road from this point to Fort Leavenworth were these crossings, the road between them being very fine— And I shall not in future be so particular in mentioning the condition of the road each day.

AUGUST 24TH Continued down the River, which runs East 18 Miles and encamped on it— To day the valley was well timbered with very large sized Cotton Wood suitable for Building purposes— The Hills for a short distance contained Stone— The Soil in the vicinity of the heavy timber was very good, and I have little doubt would produce grain very readily— Should there ever be necessity for a Post in this Neighborhood, this will be a suitable point

37. Medicine creek, at present Cambridge, Neb. Although the time and place of crossing is not clear, Easton was obviously now traveling on the north or left bank of the Republican. In recent years the creek was noted for its sudden flash floods, which are now curbed by the new Medicine creek dam.

38. Muddy creek or Elk creek, both debouching near present Arapahoe, Neb.

for it<sup>39</sup>— Killed three Grouse this evening, this Bird is found in great numbers from this point to the Missouri River.

AUGUST 25TH In consequence of rain and the detention in crossing streams, we were unable to march over 10 Miles— Our direction was East, down the valley of the River.— Guide killed a large fat Buck Elk— Saw a herd of 32 Elk.

AUGUST 26TH Course to day E. S. E. still down the valley.<sup>40</sup> Here we leave the Buffalo range, and meet with smaller game, Deer Antelope, Turkeys and Grouse—

Met to day a small party of Pawnees on a Stealing expedition, against the Cheyennes, whom they expected to find near the head waters of the Republican— Besides their Arms each Man carried his Lariette and Whip, without which an outfit is considered incomplete on such a campaign— Our Guide and a Dragoon, who were a Mile behind us, having stopped to butcher a Buffalo, were met by this party, and at their request the Guide dismounted and gave them some meat; for their act of Kindness one of the Indians threw his Arms around and tenderly embraced him— Shortly after, Hunoit wishing to use his knife, found to his mortification, that the affectionate Pawnee had stolen it from his Scabbard (which was on his belt behind him) whilst evincing his gratitude, in the manner above described— Carrying their duplicity yet further, whilst the Knife was changing owners, an Indian feigned to remove the Bridle from the Dragoon's Horse's Head, attracting the Soldier's attention to this act, whilst another Pawnee cut off a choice piece of Buffalo meat, which was tied behind his Saddle— I merely mention this circumstances to give you an idea of the skill and ingenuity of the Pawnees in such matters.

AUGUST 27TH Continued down the Republican 22 Miles, and encamped on it, our course being East<sup>41</sup>— We found great quantities of fine plums and an abundance of good summer grapes, on to day's march— Great care was taken in selecting our Camp, and in picketing our Animals as close as possible, as we expected a visit from the Pawnees we met yesterday— But after a very cold night (all complaining of having slept cold) in the morning we found all our Animals present.

AUGUST 28TH Our course as yesterday East 18 Miles down the River, where we encamped on its banks— Care was again taken

39. Near present Oxford, Neb. Fort Kearny on the Oregon trail was only about 45 miles to the northwest of this point.

40. Past the mouth of Beaver creek to the vicinity of present Alma, Neb.

41. This day's journey was through the present large Harlan county reservoir area. Prairie Dog creek, passed this day, was named in 1843 by Fremont.

in selecting our position, the Sentinels cautioned particularly against Pawnees, and all necessary precautions taken to provide against our Animals being stolen, as we still expected a visit from the Indians, presuming that they would follow us for several days— Notwithstanding all our precautions to provide against such an event, Lieut Evans' favorite Poney which was picketed within 20 Yards of the Sentinel's Post, was stolen during the night—

Plums and Grape particularly the latter we found in fine perfection on nearly all the Creeks we crossed— We passed to day through the remains of a large Pawnee Village, and we were glad to find that they had left it a few days before, for their permanent village on the Platte, otherwise we might have lost a few more Animals. Before leaving Camp this morning Lieut Evans caught a good horse branded "US"— It was wounded in the neck with an Arrow, but soon recovered from it— This Animal probably had strayed from Fort Kearny.

AUGUST 29TH Marched down the River E by N. 13 Miles, where our Guide having killed three fat Buffalo Cows, and as we were leaving the range of these Animals, and desirous of laying in a supply of Meat, I concluded to stop and give the Men an opportunity of jerking the meat from these Cows— The Buffalo were killed near the River and each within 10 Steps of the others— We pitched our Tents within 50 Yards of them a few hours afterwards both sides of each Waggon was covered with slices of Meat, strung on Cords for the purpose of drying.

AUGUST 30TH Still on the Banks of the Republican, having to day marched down the valley 16 Miles, East by N.<sup>42</sup>— One of the Dragoon Horses gave out to day and we were compelled to abandon him— Grouse in great numbers—

AUGUST 31ST Marched 14 Miles in an Easterly direction and encamped on the river— Our march was short to day, in consequence of our having been detained in crossing a number of Streams— Our Mules commenced giving out, for which we could not account, they having had fine grass, short marches and ample time and opportunity to graze— We reduced our teams to five mules each and turned loose the sixth to follow the Waggon and rest— When a Mule gave out in a Team, one of the loose ones supplied it's place, and the tired Animal was released to follow and rest. By this means I returned to this Post with every Animal I took from it, (except one that was left on the road out, with the glanders) after a journey of over 1400 Miles—

42. Today's camp was near present Red Cloud, Neb.

Dr. Park's servant whilst bringing wood into Camp this Evening trod on a Rattlesnake which bit him on the side of his leg above the Boot— The same remedies (Knife & gunpowder) resorted to as in the case of Private Covey, and with equal success— The patient was similarly affected and recovered in about the same length of time—

SEPTEMBER 1ST Marched E. S. E. 7 Miles and encamped on the River— A well beaten trail crossed our road to day, leading in the direction of the Platte (N. N. E.) it crosses the Republican and is I presume used by the Pawnees in travelling from the Platte to Smoky Hill Fork, and the Arkansas Rivers<sup>43</sup>— While Oak made it's appearance to day on the Creeks, which is the first Oak we have seen since we left Laramie—

SEPTEMBER 2D SUNDAY In consequence of the fatigued condition of our Animals and in order that the Men might have an opportunity to wash their Clothes, I did not march to day.

SEPTEMBER 3RD Before starting this morning a small party of Pawnees came into our Camp, they informed us that they were returning from the Arkansas to their village on the Plattes— Marched down the River 22 Miles and encamped on it.<sup>44</sup> Saw a drove of Turkeys to day, on a small Creek; from this Creek to the Missouri River we found this game in great abundance, particularly on all the small Streams that we crossed until we reached Union Town.

SEPTEMBER 4TH We followed the River to day by travelling 9 Miles South and 10 Miles South East, when we encamped.<sup>45</sup>— Two well beaten trails cross the River on our route to day in a direction N. N. E. they had recently been travelled over by large numbers of Indians, probably Pawnees returning to the Platte.

SEPTEMBER 5TH By following the River to day our course has been 7 Miles N. E. and 10 Miles E— We made preparation last night and the night before for a visit from the Pawnees, whom we saw on the 3rd Inst.; but they either did not follow us or had no opportunity of stealing any of our Animals, as we lost none— Saw a large herd of 80 or 90 Elk to day on the South side of the River.<sup>46</sup>

43. The Pawnee road between the Platte and the Arkansas rivers is mentioned also by Fremont, p. 109, and is indicated on Lieutenant Warren's map. The crossing would be in the vicinity of "the true location of the Republican Pawnee Indian Village where on September 29, 1806, Lieut. Z. M. Pike ordered down the Spanish flag and saw the Stars and Stripes rise in its stead. . . . in Nebraska, between the towns of Guide Rock and Red Cloud, on the south side of the Republican river."—A. E. Sheldon, editor, *Nebraska History Magazine*, Lincoln, v. 10 (July-September, 1927), pp. 159-258. Kansas has officially taken the view that the "true site" is near Republic, Kan., about eight miles southeast of Hardy, Neb.

44. This camp may have been just inside the state of Kansas, below present Superior, Neb.

45. Near present Republic, Kan.

46. Here is the first clear-cut evidence in the text that the expedition followed the left or north side of the Republican. The given directions here, however, are obviously in error.

SEPTEMBER 6TH & 7TH By reason of the difficulty of crossing two Creeks, at one of which we were compelled to unload our Waggon and draw them over by hand, we have been unable to march over 18 Miles these two days <sup>47</sup>— Our course has been 8 Miles E. and 10 Miles S. E.— The Streams now tributary to the Republican are well timbered with Oak, Walnut and Elm, and they continue to be so the balance of our march, with the addition of Hickory as we get a little further down the River.

The difficulty of crossing the two Streams to day was owing to the necessity of making a bridge over one of them that had a very miry bottom, the steep banks of the other were composed of Stone which we could not cut down with our Pick-Axe and Spades.

SEPTEMBER 8TH Our course to day was S. E. down the River— Owing to the River running close to the Bluffs on the North side we were compeled to take to Hills, which gave us a road over long hills and deep ravines for about 6 Miles— The balance of our day's march was in the valley over a good road. Distance travelled to day was 17 Miles.—

SEPTEMBER 9TH Owing to the fatigued condition of our Animals, we made a late start this morning, and only marched 8 Miles in a S. E. direction— We were again compelled to take to the Hills, having the River in sight, when we found a good road, and encamped in the evening on a Creek, with good Grass <sup>48</sup>— Saw to day a large number of Deer, Turkies and Antelope—

SEPTEMBER 10TH We continued our march over the Hills to day in a S. E. direction 18 Miles where we turned into the River and encamped— We found the River at this point double the size and differing in some other respects from the River where we encamped on it last— This fact convinced me that the Smoky Hill Fork, had joined the Republican, between these two points, but we did not see the Junction, having deviated our road some two Miles from the River— Several Mules gave out to day and would not move, until taken out of Harness.— We found a large quantity of Sea Vines on the River at our present encampment, and our Animals appeared to enjoy them exceedingly. This Vine is plentiful on all the Creeks, from this point to Fort Leavenworth— It is a fine food for Horses & Mules—

SEPTEMBER 11TH I determined to return up the River this morning, and look for the junction of the Smoky Hill and Republican Forks; in order to do this I directed the Train to proceed down the

47. Camp near present Concordia.

48. Below present Clay Center.

River, and encamp on the first Stream, that required any work on it to enable us to cross— And accompanied by Lieut Evans and one Dragoon, I started up the River in search of the Forks, and to make any examination of the Country in the vicinity of them— We rode only 3 Miles up the River, when we discovered from a high Hill, the junction of the two Forks, these join in a beautiful valley, from 3 to 4 Miles broad, and which is composed of a very fine rich soil & well timbered, with almost all the varieties, of fine timber that is found in the Western States— The hills which bound the vallies were very high and rolling, from the summits of which is a fine view both up and down the vallies of the rivers, and the scenery from where we stood was beautiful <sup>49</sup>— After spending some time in examining the Country, I returned to the Train, which had made but little progress, in consequence of the Difficulty in crossing a Creek— And we encamped at a Creek which it was necessary to bridge, and which was only 4 Miles from our last Camp <sup>50</sup>— Our direction with the Waggons was E. N. E.—

SEPTEMBER 12TH Marched to day E. N. E., 11 Miles, where we came to a high ridge, a spur making out to the South from the main Bluffs and terminated to all appearance, abruptly on the Kansas River— In ascending this spur the hill was very long and steep, and we found it necessary to double our Teams, to enable us to get our Waggons over. When we arrived at the top of this Spur, we were much gratified to find, that it terminated on the Blue River (instead of the Kansas) which with its blue water and Sandy bed passed immediately under us, and then winding it's way to the Kansas, about one and a half miles distant, which winds off to the South side of the valley, before the Blue enters it.— We descended the Spur on the East side and then entered the valley of the Blue.— We continued up the River about one and a half Miles, when we found a ford, than [*sic*] enabled us to cross, and encamped on the West bank of the River

SEPTEMBER 13TH Crossed the Blue this morning, which had a hard sandy bottom; the depth of the Water was such that it required our smallest Mules to swim about 10 Paces; not withstanding we crossed without the slightest accident. The timber just below the Mouth of the Blue, extends out from the Kansas on the Hills for some distance, to avoid this and to obtain a better road, we took a N. E. direction, and after marching 10 Miles crossed the Big

49. This would soon become the site of Fort Riley, actually established in 1853. In 1852 Easton was one of a group of officers designated to select the site.

50. Wildcat creek, at present Manhattan.

Vermillion, a stream which flows where we crossed it, rapidly over a rocky bottom— Continued our march 4 Miles and encamped on a branch of the Big Vermillion <sup>51</sup>

SEPTEMBER 14TH Left Camp this morning taking E. N. E. course; one and a half miles from Camp, we were highly gratified to find ourselves once more in a Waggon road which was the broad road leading from Independence Mo. to the South Pass <sup>52</sup>— Our Animals appeared to cheer up at such a prospect and travelled much freer and faster than they did when they had to break a road for themselves— We followed this road 23 Miles and encamped on the head of a little Creek that enters into the Kansas

SEPTEMBER 15TH Continued our March on the road until within 3 Miles of the Ferry at Uniontown, <sup>53</sup> when I directed the Waggon to turn off, and take an East direction, until they came into the Waggon road leading from Uniontown to St Joseph Mo, and to encamp at the first point where there was water and good grass— On leaving the Waggon I proceeded to Uniontown, with a few men to obtain provisions, as our rations were out tonight. Uniontown is situated a mile from the Kansas on the South side, there are a few dwellings and four or five Stores, which contain Indian Goods and a variety of such Articles an Emigrants would probably require at that point— I obtained without difficulty such articles as I wanted, and at a very reasonable price, and recrossed the River and took the St Joseph road to Camp, which I found about 5 Miles from the Ferry, on a Slough of the Kansas, and near the Farm of a Pottowatomie, who furnished us with almost every variety of farm produce Butter, Eggs, Potatoes, Corn, Milk, Chickens &c in exchange for Mess Pork, which he preferred to Silver or Gold— Our Mess owing to bad management had been out of everything for some time past, save miserable bread and meat and Coffee once a day, and we had quite an appetite for the fine supper of vegetables &c that was set before us this Evening— Total distance travelled by the Train 14 Miles—

SEPTEMBER 16TH Followed the St. Joseph road to day, which runs East 8 Miles and then crosses Soldier Creek where we obtained some Corn for our Animals, from a Frenchman who lives on that Creek— After crossing the Creek the road runs N. E. and we

51. At present Belvue.

52. Over this road (the Oregon trail or the California road) some 25,000 souls (including Captain Easton and the dragoons) had passed westward the preceding season. The best current description of the route is to be found in Irene D. Paden's *The Wake of the Prairie Schooner* (New York, 1943).

53. Uniontown, Union Village, or Unionville was opposite present Rossville.



travelled on it 18 Miles more and encamped on the Grasshopper Creek which is a fine Stream of clear water, with a rocky bottom, an abundance of Pea Vines on it, and the valley well timbered— Soldier Creek is also well timbered, and near its banks was fine Grass.

SEPTEMBER 17TH Followed the Saint Joseph road 7 Miles travelling N. E. where we left it and travelled an indistinct Waggon trail, which turns off to Fort Leavenworth,<sup>54</sup> marched 15 Miles farther and pitched our Tents on the Stranger, the Mules being too much fatigued to go into Leavenworth to day— Our direction since we left the St Joseph Trace has been E. N. E.— After resting my riding Mule I mounted and Started for Leavenworth, rode E. N. E. 2 Miles and came into the road leading to Fort Kearny, when I followed that road into this Post a distance of 9 Miles—

The distance from Fort Leavenworth to Union Town by the road I travelled is 64 Miles over a fine road, with abundance of Grass, Wood and Water; and from Uniontown to Council Grove is 45 Miles, which I am told is an equally good road— The distance from this Post to Council Grove by the road that our trains now travel is 160 Miles, making a difference in the distance of the two routes of 51 Miles in favor of the Uniontown route— All that is necessary to make the route from here to Uniontown a fine road for our heavy trains is to cut timber out sufficiently wide for Waggon, on the Stranger, Grasshopper and Soldier Creeks, and to dig the Banks down on the Stranger and Grasshopper, the former requires but little work— I have not travelled on the road from Uniontown to Council Grove, but I am informed on good authority that very little labor will make it an excellent road— I respectfully recommend that this route be opened and used hereafter by our trains intended for Santa Fe!— I have drawn a rough Map which accompanies this report, and which will give you a more correct idea of the new route I propose, and also of the route and country I have travelled over.

With regard to obtaining a better route from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Laramie, by way of the Republican Fork of the Kansas, than the one now travelled, I have to report that I have been particular in examining and comparing the two routes, and decidedly recommend that the Department use the one now in use for all purposes— Independent of the great distance in favor of the Platte

54. This route is roughly indicated in "Map of Eastern Kansas in 1854 . . .," p. 67, A. T. Andrews and W. G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago, 1883).

you will see from the foregoing journal that the nature of the Country from the Republican Fork to Fort Laramie forbids the idea of changing the present route.

The Republican Fork differs very materially in character from the Platte River— It is a deeper stream, in proportion to it's size the water not spreading over so great a surface— It is much better timbered, there being a continuous strip of timber along it's banks, without any interval of consequence, as far West as 100° of longitude, and from that degree as far West as it would be necessary to travel on it, there is Wood at convenient distances— All the little Streams emptying into it on the N and S sides, are well timbered— The Platte has but a few Creeks, flowing into it, while the Republican has an almost innumerable number— The soil for purposes of cultivation in the Valley of the Republican is far superior to that on the Platte— The Grass along it's valley and also on its innumerable small tributaries, is far superior to that found on the Platte— It has also a greater variety of Game and a greater quantity of it— Buffalo on this River between the points indicated on the Map literally cover the Country, Elk, Antelope, Turkeys and Grouse are in great numbers— Nearly all the little tributaries are well shaded, and the water in them is cool and pleasant to drink— A good road can be made with little labor on either side of this River, either in the valley or farther back from it over the Hills—

As to whether or not this is a better route for Emigrants to take from Independence to the South Pass, is a question which I cannot, of course, fully answer, as I have never been West either of Fort Laramie or St Vrain's Fort, and consequently cannot compare the routes, leading from those two places to the South Pass which is a very important consideration—

I can only then compare the route up the Platte as far as Fort Laramie with the route up the Republican Fork as far as St Vrain's Fort— So far as Wood Water and Grass are concerned, I give the latter route a decided preference— With regard to the road, I doubt if as good an one could be obtained, as the one leading up the Platte, that road being almost unexceptionable— Yet a fine road can be made on the Republican route.

Should the Republican route be taken by Emigrants, from Independence to the South Pass, I would recommend that the Santa Fe road be followed from the former place for about 70 Miles, when the route should turn off from that road and cross the Smoky Hill Fork near its Mouth; from this point it should take a course NW.

10° West, until it strikes the Republican, in order to avoid the circuitous route of that River— By taking this course the tributaries of the Republican or Solomons Fork, which are at short intervals, will furnish Wood Water and Grass— On reaching the Republican Fork, the road should follow up the River to the North Fork, and then up that Fork to it's head— The only possible difficulty than [*sic*] can exist will be the want of Water in crossing from the head waters of this Fork, to the Platte, which I do not think can be over 50 Miles— And I also feel confident that large ponds or lakes can be found that will furnish an abundant supply of Water— After leaving the head of the North Fork of the Republican, a W. N. W course should be taken, until reaching the Waggon road leading up the South Fork of the Platte, and thence up that road to the mouth of the Cache a la Poudre [?], and from this point it would be necessary to take Col Fremont's route in 1843 up the Cache a la Poudre, on to the Laramie Plains (if that road be practicable for Waggons). I have traced the route I propose on the enclosed Map which will give you a better idea of it than my description— The route up the South Fork of the Platte, from the point at which this proposed route will strike it, to the Mouth of the Cache a la Poudre is represented as very good, with fine Grass and a sufficiency of Wood.

The source of the North Fork of the Republican was not ascertained definitely by me— But the size of the Stream, the direction it takes as far as I could see from the Mouth the nature of the Country, and the fact that I did not strike it coming down from the Platte to the Republican, convinces me that it must bend near where it is represented on the enclosed Map.

With a hope that this Report will give you some idea of the Country passed over by me, and that my exertions to give you satisfaction on my late expedition may meet with your approbation, I have the honor to be, Sir,

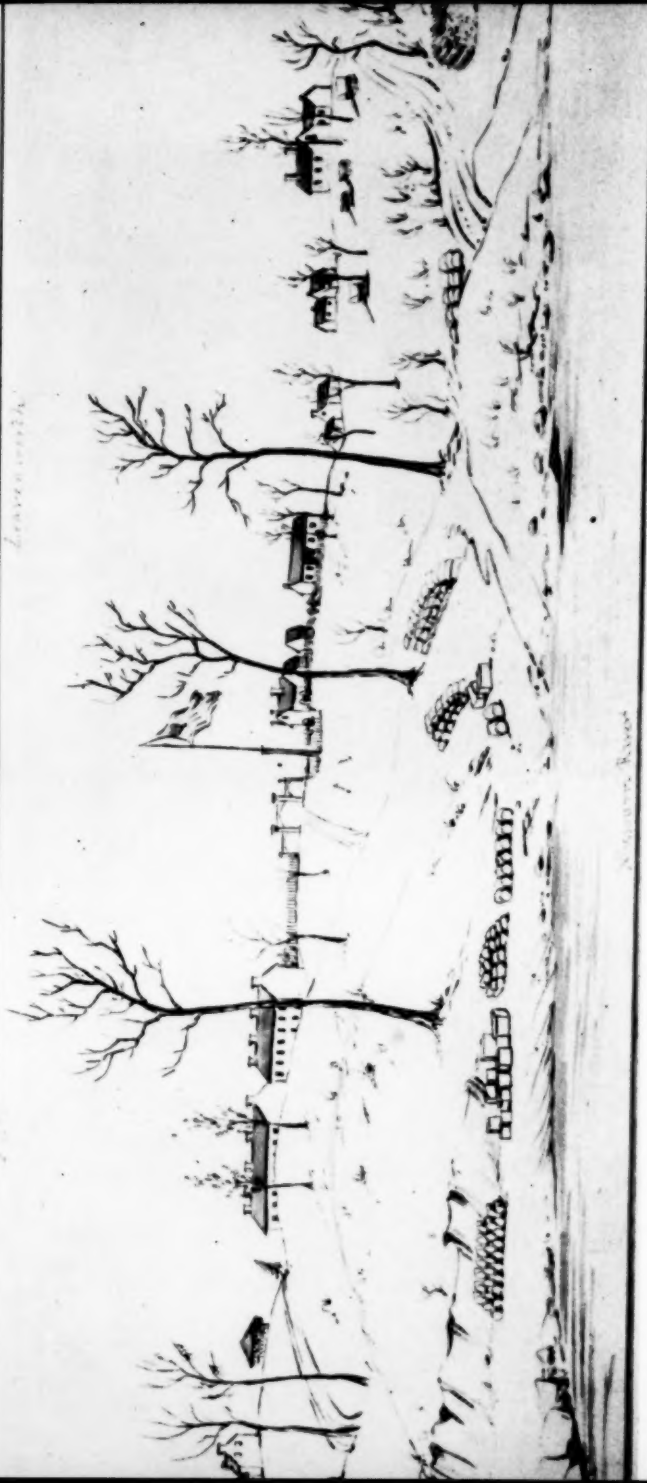
Very respectfully,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
L. C. EASTON  
Capt. A. Q. M.

To

COL. A. MACKAY  
Dy. Qr Master Genl US Army  
Saint Louis. Mo

TABLE OF DISTANCES FROM FORT LARAMIE TO FORT LEAVENWORTH, VIA  
REPUBLICAN FORK OF THE KANZAS

Date 1849	Distance travelled each day	Distance from Ft. Laramie	Localities
August	2nd	9	
"	3th	15	
"	4th	33	Horse Creek
"	5th	3	
"	6th	23	Pole Creek
"	7th	22	
"	8th	17	
"	9th	25	
"	10th	25	S. Fork of Platte
"	11th	22	
"	12th	17	Large Pond
"	13th	27	
"	14th	20	Republican Fork
"	15th	18	
"	16th	19	7 Miles below N. Fork
"	17th	19	
"	18th	25	
"	19th	10	
"	20th	24	
"	21th	18	
"	22th	15	
"	23th	14	
"	24th	18	
August	25th	10	
	26th	19	
	27th	22	
	28th	18	
	29th	13	
	30th	16	
	31st	14	Pawnee Trail
September	1st	17	
	3rd	22	Pawnee Trails
	4th	19	
	5th	17	
	6th	8	
	7th	10	
	8th	17	
	9th	8	
	10th	18	3 Miles below mouth of Smoky Hill Fork
	11th	4	
	12th	11	Blue River
	13th	14	Big Vermillion
	14th	23	
	15th	14	Near Uniontown
	16th	26	Grasshopper Creek
	17th	33	Ft. Leavenworth



**FORT LEAVENWORTH IN 1849**

From an original drawing in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin



**FORT LARAMIE (WYOMING) IN 1849**

From Howard Stansbury's *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah*  
(Philadelphia, 1852)

## Kansas Negro Regiments in the Civil War

DUDLEY TAYLOR CORNISH

NEGRO soldiers made a substantial contribution to the victory of Union arms in the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> Two Kansas Negro regiments<sup>2</sup> played an active role in the war on the border, from Fort Scott south along the Arkansas frontier to Fort Smith and Camden and Pine Bluff. Although the history of these regiments is fundamentally military, it has important social and political overtones.

The records are not easily found, for they are scattered through the 130 volumes of the *Official Records*. The story is treated sympathetically but partially in Britton's *Civil War on the Border*. The full history must be dug out of contemporary newspapers, adjutant generals' reports, the correspondence and memoirs of some of the main characters in the drama, much of it in the Kansas State Historical Society's excellent collections in Topeka. Important and illuminating details can be found only in the regimental and company records on file (in part only) in the National Archives, Washington, D. C. The story of these two Kansas Negro regiments is a fascinating one; often thrilling, sometimes pathetic, and now and then horrifying or heroic.

Abraham Lincoln's administration refused offers of Negro military assistance in the first 15 months of the Civil War because of ill-founded hopes that the Southern insurrection might be quickly put down, that the Confederacy might become reconciled to a return to the Union, and that in any case white volunteer armies would be able to defeat the opposing armies of the South. President Lincoln feared that the use of Negroes would turn loyal men of the Border states away from the Union cause and stir the South to more determined efforts. Feeling against Negroes was strong among labor groups and some foreign elements in the North, and there was a substantial body of opinion which held that the acceptance of

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1. Although the raw material for work on the Negro soldier in the Civil War is extremely plentiful, only three book-length studies have appeared since Appomattox; the most recent was published in 1891. For the slow development of top Union policy and procedure in the use of Negro troops, see Dudley Taylor Cornish, "Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865," an unpublished doctoral dissertation (University of Colorado, Boulder, 1949).

2. There were four Kansas Negro military organizations during the Civil War: the First Kansas Colored Volunteers, later officially designated by the War Department as the 79th U. S. Colored troops (new); the Second Kansas Colored volunteers, later designated the 83rd U. S. Colored troops (new); the Leavenworth Colored militia (infantry) called into service in October, 1864, on the occasion of the great Price raid; and the Independent Colored Kansas battery (light artillery), unique in that it was officered entirely by Negroes. For a good discussion of Kansas Negro soldiers, see Thomas James Boyd, "The Use of Negro Troops by Kansas During the Civil War," an unpublished master's thesis (Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, 1950).

Negro soldiers would be an admission of white failure and therefore an insult to white soldiers.

Favoring the use of colored soldiers were Abolitionists and Radicals who maintained that slavery was the primary cause of the war and that the war, accordingly, ought to be considered and conducted as a crusade against the institution of slavery. Radicals in congress and in the army forced the issue of Negro troops on the Union by providing legislation permitting their enrollment<sup>3</sup> and by organizing colored units before public opinion had expressed itself in favor of their enrollment and organization.<sup>4</sup> Not until the war had dragged well into the second year without substantial Union gains did hope for reconciliation with the South die, and not until Negro soldiers had demonstrated in combat what they could do for the Union did feeling against them begin to subside.<sup>5</sup>

Although the movement to use Negroes made slow progress in the North and East during the first year and a half of war, matters moved more rapidly in the trans-Mississippi West. More than three months before Secretary of War Simon Cameron was dropped from Lincoln's cabinet, for, among other reasons, urging too forcefully the value of Negro soldiers,<sup>6</sup> the Leavenworth *Daily Conservative* discussed without adverse comment the plans of Col. Charles R. Jennison for organizing Negroes into Home Guard units, and one of the paper's correspondents described a colored soldier he had seen among Sen. James H. Lane's cavalry troops.<sup>7</sup>

3. The Second Confiscation Act of July 17, 1862, authorized the President "to employ as many persons of African descent as he may deem necessary and proper for the suppression of this rebellion," and to that end to "organize and use them in such manner as he may judge best for the public welfare." Another act passed the same day went further and specifically authorized the employment of Negro soldiers. In both instances, the authority was vested in the President, and actual enrollment of Negro soldiers was left to his discretion.—*U. S. Statutes at Large*, v. 12, pp. 592, 599.

4. Maj. Gen. David Hunter, commanding the Department of the South, began to recruit the famous First South Carolina volunteers on May 9, 1862.—*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series 3, v. 2, p. 31. (Hereafter cited *Official Records*.) On August 22, 1862, Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, commanding the Department of the Gulf, published his General Order No. 63, calling on the free colored militia of Louisiana to enroll in volunteer forces serving the Union. *Ibid.*, pp. 436-438. Neither Hunter nor Butler had presidential permission for this activity; Hunter's experiment failed through lack of War Department support, but Butler was permitted to continue without let or hindrance and by November, 1862, had mustered three infantry regiments into federal service.—*Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861, '62, '63, '64, '65*, Pt. 8 (Washington, 1867), pp. 246, 248, 250. (Hereafter cited *Official Army Register*.)

5. Wrote Joseph Holt, the Judge Advocate General, to Secretary of War E. M. Stanton in August, 1863, "The tenacious and brilliant valor displayed by [Negro] troops . . . at Fort Hudson, Milliken's Bend, and Fort Wagner has sufficiently demonstrated to the President and to the country the character of service of which they are capable."—*Official Records*, Series 3, v. 3, p. 696. Holt's judgment was widely shared by the Northern press.

6. For a complete discussion of the circumstances surrounding Cameron's dismissal, see A. Howard Meneely, "Three Manuscripts of Gideon Welles," *American Historical Review*, Lancaster, Pa., v. 31 (April, 1925), pp. 486-494.

7. The Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, September 24 and October 8, 1861. Jennison, an old friend and associate of John Brown, was of the Radical Abolitionist school and enjoyed a reputation for border ruffianism. James H. Lane, the Great Jayhawker and stormy petrel of the Border and Kansas politics, had been made a brigadier by Cameron on Lincoln's recommendation in June, 1861, with authority to raise two regiments of volunteers.—*Official Records*, Series 3, v. 1, pp. 280, 281.



This Kansas activity was completely without the authority and contrary to the policy of the Lincoln administration. It continued even against express instructions from Washington. The reason can be found in part in Wiley Britton's study of border warfare.<sup>8</sup> So tenuous was the military situation and so explosive the political situation in the region, so difficult was the task of containing the surging Confederates and curbing the guerrilla warfare which made life precarious in Arkansas and Missouri, not to say eastern Kansas, that the supply of white troops was seldom if ever adequate to the requirements of Union commanders in the field. The demands were so great that practicality ruled out prejudice, slowly at first, and then with gathering speed. The *Emporia News* toward the close of 1861, argued that if the South insisted on using Negroes "to shoot down our brave sons, ought we not to retaliate by using them to subdue the enemies of the Government?"<sup>9</sup> And Senator Lane maintained in early 1862 that a Negro might "just as well become food for powder" as his son.<sup>10</sup>

In the senate,<sup>11</sup> Lane was characteristically outspoken in urging the use of Negroes. "Give them a fair chance," he argued, "put arms in their hands and they will do the balance of the fighting in this war." To Jim Lane it was a matter of large indifference whether traitors were punished "on the battle-field, on the gallows or from the brush by a negro."<sup>12</sup>

Since color was not specifically mentioned in Lane's authority to raise Union troops, the senator's loose-constructionist conscience suffered no qualms. Aided by such old John Brown supporters as Charles Jennison and James Montgomery, the Great Jayhawker went to work.<sup>13</sup> Lane wanted men; he asked no questions about

8. *The Civil War on the Border* (2 vols., New York, 1899), *passim*. Further light is thrown on the nature of the border conflict and on the manpower difficulties characteristic of it by the recently published Trego letters; see especially "The Letters of Joseph H. Trego, 1857-1864. Linn County Pioneer," Pt. 2, 1861-1862 (Edgar Langsdorf, ed.), *The Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 19 (August, 1951), pp. 287-309.

9. *The Emporia News*, December 21, 1861.

10. *The Leavenworth Daily Conservative*, January 29, 1862.

11. On January 15, 1862, Lane introduced a resolution to authorize field commanders of Kansas units to muster all persons who presented themselves for that purpose. Although in debate on the resolution Lane maintained that it would not give commanders power to arm Negroes, he drew gallery cheers with his assertion that he would say to Negroes, "I have not arms for you, but if it is in your power to obtain arms from rebels, take them, and I will use you as soldiers against traitors."—*Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 Sess., pp. 334, 335.

12. *Leavenworth Daily Conservative*, January 29, 1862. The quotations are from a speech Lane made to the Leavenworth Mercantile Library Association on January 27.

13. Neither Jennison nor Montgomery seems to have given Lane more personal loyalty than momentary expediency required; behind each others backs they plotted for personal advancement. On August 3, 1862, Montgomery blasted Jennison in a letter to Governor Robinson as "an unmitigated liar black-leg and Robber; . . ." Montgomery was urging his own candidacy as colonel of the colored troops being raised. On August 12, George H. Hoyt, a friend of Jennison's, wrote Robinson that while Jennison was working with Lane (no friend to Robinson) he "takes hold of this work, not as a Lane man, but altogether on the Jennison basis. . . ." Jennison wanted to be colonel, too. On August 22, Jennison himself wrote Governor Robinson to report that he had discovered "at all

race, color, or previous condition of servitude. For a time, Jennison led what was called the "Tri-color Brigade," composed of white, Indian, and Negro units.<sup>14</sup> In early August, Lane casually disclosed to the War Department what kind of recruits he was rounding up: "Recruiting opens up beautifully," he wired, "Good for four regiments of whites and two of blacks. . . ." <sup>15</sup> He claimed the Second Confiscation Act of July 17, 1862, as his authority for enrolling Negroes and on August 6 asked if the War Department had any objection.<sup>16</sup> The department did, as anyone who read the newspapers carefully should have known,<sup>17</sup> but not until the end of August did Secretary of War Stanton tell Lane that Negro regiments could not be accepted into service.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, Negro recruiting in and around Kansas proceeded. If Jim Lane ever received Stanton's message, his conduct betrayed no sign of it. Early in August he opened a recruiting office in Leavenworth for the enlistment of both white and colored men, although the latter were technically enrolled as laborers.<sup>19</sup> To recruit Negroes north of the Kansas river, Lane appointed Capt. James M. Williams, and he named Capt. H. C. Seaman to enroll colored volunteers south of the river.<sup>20</sup>

By the end of September, 1862, a New York *Times* correspondent was able to write at length from the "Headquarters First Regiment, Kansas Colored Volunteers, Camp 'Jim Lane' Near Wyandot." The new organization, he reported, was "progressing finely." This *Times* correspondent was one of the first of his contemporaries to comment with obvious surprise on "the aptitude of the men for acquiring the drill" and the neatness and order of their camp. He

points in Southern Kansas a general feeling that Lane is a great humbug." Although Jennison did become a colonel, he never commanded either Kansas Negro regiment. In disgust, Montgomery went to Washington in December, 1862, and eventually became colonel of the Second South Carolina Colored volunteers, afterward the 34th U. S. Colored troops.—"Robinson Papers," Ms. division, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

14. The *Emporia News*, August 9, 1862. "Col. Jennison is placed in charge of the African department of the recruiting service here, by Gen. Lane," reported the Kansas correspondent of the *New York Times*, August 17, 1862.

15. *Official Records*, Series 3, v. 2, pp. 294, 295, Lane to Stanton, August 5, 1862.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 311, Lane to Stanton, August 6, 1862.

17. Lincoln had that morning declined the offer of an Indiana deputation to raise two regiments of Negro troops with the explanation that "he was not prepared to go the length of enlisting negroes as soldiers. He would employ all colored men offered as laborers, but would not promise to make soldiers of them."—The *New York Times*, August 6, 1862. On the same day the War Department informed the governor of Wisconsin: "The President declines to receive Indians or negroes as troops."—*Official Records*, Series 3, v. 2, p. 314, Buckingham to Salomon, August 6, 1862.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 445, Stanton to Lane, August 23, 1862.

19. Daniel W. Wilder, *The Annals of Kansas* (Topeka, 1886), p. 350.

20. *Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion* (Leavenworth, 1870), p. 407. (Hereafter cited *Kansas Regiments*). The *Leavenworth Daily Conservative*, August 6, 1862, asserted that both Williams and Seaman were generally known as Abolitionists.

found them easily managed, accustomed to discipline and well suited to soldiering.<sup>21</sup>

These colored troops soon became more than recruits sweating at drill and endlessly policing their company streets. Late in October, 1862, they engaged a large force of guerrillas near Butler, Bates county, Mo., in what "is supposed to have been the first engagement in the war in which colored troops were engaged."<sup>22</sup> A Leavenworth *Conservative* correspondent waxed eloquent on the military prowess of these new additions to the Union forces: "It is useless to talk anymore about negro courage—the men fought like tigers . . . and the main difficulty was to hold them well in hand."<sup>23</sup> Five companies later returned to Bates county and engaged a large force of rebels near Island Mound, November 25 to 29, 1862. After capturing a large amount of stock and routing their enemies, the Negro soldiers continued on to Fort Scott.<sup>24</sup>

This actual employment as combat troops, if only against rebel irregulars and bushwackers, was good publicity and seems to have helped reduce resistance to Negro recruiting. On January 13, 1863, six companies were mustered into federal service as the First regiment, Kansas Colored Volunteers, Lt. Col. James Williams commanding.<sup>25</sup> Four more companies were added to complete the regiment during the spring of 1863.<sup>26</sup> On the basis of dates of muster-in, the First Kansas Colored was the fourth Negro regiment to enter the Union army. Ben Butler had enrolled three regiments in Louisiana in the fall of 1862, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson's First South Carolina Volunteers was mustered in on January 31, 1863.<sup>27</sup> On the basis of newspaper accounts and military reports, however, Kansas appears to have been the first Union state to begin enrolling Negro soldiers; small units and companies of Kansas colored soldiers fought in the first engagements of the war in which Negro soldiers as such were used.

21. The *New York Times*, October 12, 1862: "The very first idea of a soldier's life, subordination, to learn which our white citizens have to unlearn nearly all their past experience has taught them, the negroes, by the circumstances of their lives, have certainly to a degree as great as the most strenuous martinet would insist upon. An army is essentially a despotism; the only point is to intelligently accept it, and, using the power thus acquired, our army will be invincible."

22. *Kansas Regiments*, pp. 408, 409. The boast is an accurate one: The First South Carolina Colored Volunteers (afterward the 33rd U. S. Colored troops) saw its first active service in the week of November 3 to 10, 1862, and then only one company participated. —*Official Records*, Series 1, v. 14, pp. 191, 192, Beard to Saxton, November 10, 1862.

23. The *Chicago Tribune*, November 10, 1862, dispatch by *Conservative* correspondent.

24. Muster rolls, Companies A, B, C, D, E, G, 79th (New) U. S. Colored infantry [later official designation of the First Kansas Colored], "Record of Events Sections, Returns for November, December, 1862."—Microfilm from War Records Division, National Archives, Washington. Company G arrived at Island Mound too late to participate in the fighting.

25. *Official Army Register*, Pt. 8, p. 256.

26. *Kansas Regiments*, p. 409.

27. *Official Army Register*, Pt. 8, pp. 204, 246, 248, 250.

This radical step was not taken without opposition. Many people in Kansas and Missouri opposed the movement out of prejudice against Negroes; some had honest doubts of the military value of colored soldiers; others, like the loyal slaveholders of parts of Missouri, feared the loss of valuable property in slaves as a result of the impetuous activities of recruiting officers; still others were frankly in sympathy with the Confederate cause.<sup>28</sup>

Some Negroes offered themselves quickly and eagerly for service, others were reluctant to come forward for fear they would be badly used by the white troops around them and by the Union government.<sup>29</sup> Lane's recruiters found all sorts of obstacles placed in their paths by civil authorities; some of his officers were even charged with "unlawfully restraining persons of their liberty."<sup>30</sup> Perhaps these charges were not so unfounded as they may at first appear; perhaps the word "Volunteers" in the name of the Negro regiment was somewhat inaccurate. Jim Lane was primarily interested in getting troops; they did not *have* to be volunteers. At one Leavenworth mass meeting Lane asserted that "the negroes are mistaken if they think white men can fight for them while they stay at home." To the Negroes Lane said, "we have been saying that you would fight, and if you won't fight we will make you."<sup>31</sup>

The men who filled the companies of the First Kansas Colored seem to have been largely recruited from among fugitive slaves out of Arkansas and Missouri. Some of them were fugitives in a technical sense only; the former owners of many complained bitterly to government officials that Lane's forces had stolen them out of hand, which was probably true.<sup>32</sup>

One whole company of the First was raised by one man, Benjamin F. Van Horn. Learning that a large number of Negroes had taken refuge among the Sac and Fox Indians, Van Horn carried the news to Gen. James G. Blunt and Jim Lane. Those enthusiasts at once commissioned Van Horn as a lieutenant and sent him out to get a company, after thoughtfully providing him with several wagons of supplies and even a drill master. In a few weeks, Van Horn returned with a full-strength company of 80 men, and he was named its commander.<sup>33</sup> That Van Horn was not overcareful in selecting

28. *Kansas Regiments*, pp. 407, 408.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 407; Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, August 27, 1862; some Negroes were concerned for the care of their families left at home.

30. *Kansas Regiments*, p. 408.

31. Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, August 6, 1862.

32. *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 13, pp. 618, 619, Jackson and Clay counties, Missouri, citizens to Lincoln, September 8, 1862, and Edward M. Samuel to Lincoln, same date.

33. "Van Horn Manuscript." Ms. division, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, p. 21. This manuscript is a 30-page autobiographical statement dictated by Benjamin F. Van Horn in 1909. Events disclosed in it are well supported by military reports and records.

his men is indicated in Special Order 33, Headquarters Army of the Frontier, August 22, 1863:

IV. Privates Nero Hardridge and Elias Hardridge, Co. I, 1st Kansas Colored Vols, having been illegally recruited and mustered into the Service of the U. S., being minors and under eighteen years of age, and the consent of their parents not having been obtained, will be dropped from the Company rolls and allowed to return to their parents.

Capt. Van Horn commanding Co. I . . . will see this order carried into execution at once.

By Command of Major General Blunt:<sup>34</sup>

During the months at Fort Scott, before marching south through the rolling hill-country of southeast Kansas to duty at Baxter Springs, Fort Gibson, and along the Arkansas river, the First Kansas Colored was plagued by desertions.<sup>35</sup> Some were undoubtedly the result of recruiting tactics verging on impressment. But more important in creating a sense of injustice and a feeling of dissatisfaction among the colored soldiers were circumstances like the following, reported to the post commander by Colonel Williams: "my men have never yet received one cent of bounty or of pay although they have now been in the Service nearly 10 months."<sup>36</sup> Williams wrote General Blunt, commanding the Army of the Frontier, that his men felt "sorely troubled and grieved about the pay"<sup>37</sup> as well they might, since the white troops about them were regularly paid. In July, 1863, by which time some of the men in the regiment had been in uniform a little short of a year, this injustice was finally rectified. From that time on, the problem of desertions in the First Kansas Colored seems to have become a relatively small one.

Although these Kansas Negro soldiers did finally receive their pay, they did not get the same pay as that drawn by their white comrades in arms; far from it. An editorial appearing in the *Chicago Tribune* in May, 1864, tells the story:

READ AND BLUSH.—The colored volunteer is as good a soldier as any, with as lofty motives for serving his country. He is oftener oppressed with duties than lightened by them—he faces greater dangers than does the white—and yet, as a prisoner of war, gets no protection from his uniform, his flag, or the

34. Regimental Letter and Order Book, 79th (New) U. S. Colored troops.—Microfilm from War Records Division, National Archives.

35. See *ibid.*, Colonel Williams to Capt. S. A. Thrasher, January 29, 1863, ordering Thrasher to Neosho to return absentees reported there, and Williams to Col. William A. Phillips, same date, asking cooperation in returning deserters in his district.—See, also, circular published January 17, 1863, by General Blunt, on subject of Negro desertions, in *ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*, Williams to Col. C. W. Blair, undated, probably about April 21, 1863.

37. *Ibid.*, Williams to Capt. H. G. Loring, Blunt's acting assistant adjutant general, April 21, 1863. Williams reported "a restlessness and insubordination" among his soldiers which he thought "the natural results of these long trials and sufferings." To counteract what he called a "mutinous" spirit, Williams withdrew his men from their work on the fortifications at Fort Scott in order to give his "whole time to the discipline of the Regiment."

Union which these represent. He deserves equal pay with the best, and has been promised it. What he receives is this:

	<i>White</i>	<i>Colored</i>
Sergeant Major .....	\$21	\$7
Quartermaster Sergeant .....	21	7
First Sergeant .....	20	7
Sergeant .....	17	7
Hospital Steward .....	30	7
Corporal .....	13	7
Private .....	13	7
Chaplain .....	100	7

The white soldier is permitted to purchase his clothing himself, but from the ten dollars of the colored, three are reserved for this purpose. The white chaplain has besides a perquisite of eighteen dollars.<sup>38</sup>

Not until 1864, and then only after furious debate in the army, in the press and in congress, did Negro soldiers finally get what amounted to equal pay for equal work.<sup>39</sup>

Fear that Negro soldiers would not know how to handle money was fairly general. Accordingly, Colonel Williams prepared an unusual general order on the occasion of the First Kansas Colored's first pay day:

The Colonel commanding desires to offer a few suggestions to the enlisted men of the command upon the importance of husbanding the proceeds of your labor, which you are about to receive from the Government. You are just relieved from servile bondage, and have had but few opportunities for learning the importance of saving carefully the proceeds of your toil.

Heretofore that has all gone to an unscrupulous Master who has with it fastened still more strongly the Irons with which he held you; every dollar gained by your labor was but another link in the iron chain.

Now the whole condition of your existence is changed.

A wise and just government has decreed that hereafter you shall be free, and shall yourselves enjoy the fruit of your labor.

This boon which is freely given must not be allowed to forge your ruin. You have been brought up to habits of industry and frugality, and if you depart in the least from either of these habits, it sooner or later will have the effect to destroy your whole prosperity as individuals and measurably effect your condition as a people. I therefore urgently advise you to carefully save the money, which is about to be paid you, for the support of your families; and, as a foundation upon which to build a home for your wives and children, your families and friends.

To this end, I advise you, to make a deposit of such funds as you do not need, in some safe hands for transmission to your families, or safekeeping for yourselves.<sup>40</sup>

38. The *Chicago Tribune*, May 1, 1864.

39. See Cornish, "Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Colorado, Boulder, 1949), pp. 361-374, *passim*, for a survey of the Negro pay problem.

40. "Regimental Letter and Order Book," 79th (New) U. S. Colored troops, General Order No. 5, July 12, 1863, paragraph 1.

That the colonel's advice was followed is indicated by this newspaper comment of a few weeks later: "The soldiers of the First Colored send up with the Paymaster about \$12,000 of their pay for their families at Lawrence and Leavenworth. Bully for the First Nigger. That regiment cannot be beat."<sup>41</sup>

The first important field duty for the First Kansas Colored came when the regiment moved south from Fort Scott to the Baxter Springs outpost guarding the military road to Fort Gibson in Indian territory. While stationed at Baxter Springs, Colonel Williams' men began to build up their battle record—and their casualty list. On May 18, 1863, a foraging party of 40 or 50 white and colored troops suffered a surprise attack from guerrillas under the notorious Maj. T. R. Livingston.<sup>42</sup> The Negro regiment lost 20 men killed in action, and several were taken prisoner. One of these prisoners was afterwards murdered by Livingston's men.<sup>43</sup> In retaliation, Williams ordered one of his Confederate prisoners shot.<sup>44</sup>

Toward the end of June the regiment moved farther south as part of the escort of a wagon train for Fort Blunt, Cherokee Nation.<sup>45</sup> This expedition provided further opportunity for the Negro soldiers to show their fighting ability. At Cabin Creek the train was attacked by a large force of Texans and Indians, and after skirmishing, the rebels took up strong positions on the south bank of the creek. The next morning the Union forces attacked and in two hours' fighting drove the enemy with substantial losses from his position.<sup>46</sup> This engagement seems to have been the first in the Civil War in which white and colored Union soldiers fought side by side, and it is recorded that the white officers and men "allowed no prejudice on account of color to interfere in the discharge of their duty in the face of an enemy alike to both races."<sup>47</sup>

41. Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, September 1, 1863.

42. Wiley Britton, *The Civil War on the Border*, v. 2, p. 78. *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 22, Pt. 1, p. 322. The action took place near Sherwood, Mo.

43. See "Regimental Letter and Order Book," 79th (New) U. S. Colored troops, for correspondence between Williams and Livingston, May 20-23, 1863. Williams made his position clear on the matter of the treatment of any of his men taken prisoner: ". . . it rests with you [he wrote Livingston] to treat them as prisoners of war or not, but be assured that I will keep a like number of your men as prisoners until [sic] these colored men are accounted for. And you can safely trust that I shall visit a retributive justice upon them for any injury done them at the hands of confederate forces. . . ."—Williams to Livingston, May 21, 1863.

44. *Kansas Regiments*, p. 410.

45. *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 22, Pt. 1, pp. 379, 380. Lt. Col. Theodore H. Dodd, 2d Colorado infantry, commanded the escort which included, besides the Negro regiment, six companies of the 2d Colorado, cavalry companies from the 9th and 14th Kansas regiments, a section of the 2d Kansas battery, and 600 members of the 3d Indian Home Guards sent up from Fort Gibson to meet the train.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 380, 381. The battle plan followed was drawn up by Colonel Williams as senior officer in the escort. The engagement took place on July 2, 1863.

47. *Kansas Regiments*, pp. 411, 412.

It was at Honey Springs, slightly over two weeks later, that the First Kansas Colored established its military reputation. After an all-night march, Union troops under command of Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt came upon a strong rebel force under Gen. Douglas Cooper and after a "sharp and bloody engagement of two hours' duration" forced Cooper's command to flee the field.<sup>48</sup> During the fight the Negro regiment, which held the Union center, moved up under fire to within 50 paces of the Confederate line and there, still under fire, halted and exchanged volley fire for some 20 minutes before the rebels broke and ran.<sup>49</sup> The Kansas Negroes captured the colors of a Texas regiment, but the Second Indian regiment seems to have taken possession of the trophy after the shooting was ended.<sup>50</sup>

This was the most important battle in the regiment's entire history: it set to rest a great deal of criticism of the use of Negroes as soldiers. Wrote General Blunt of Honey Springs:

. . . I never saw such fighting done as was done by the negro regiment. They fought like veterans, with a coolness and valor that is unsurpassed. They preserved their line perfect throughout the whole engagement and, although in the hottest of the fight, they never once faltered. Too much praise can not be awarded them for their gallantry.

The question that negroes will fight is settled; besides they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command.<sup>51</sup>

An officer of the Third Wisconsin cavalry at Honey Springs, an Irish Democrat, had this to say after the fight: "I never believed in niggers before, but by Jasus, they are hell for fighting."<sup>52</sup>

Recruiting for the Second Kansas Colored Volunteers began under good auspices in June, 1863, and by the middle of October ten companies were full, officered by battle-hardened enlisted men from various white regiments.<sup>53</sup> Samuel J. Crawford, afterward governor of Kansas, was appointed colonel of this new regiment, and he played a vital role in making it what the Kansas historian William

48. *Ibid.*, p. 412. For detailed reports of this action, see *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 22, Pt. 1, pp. 447-462. Some light is thrown on the reasons for Confederate defeat by Charles R. Freeman, "The Battle of Honey Springs," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Oklahoma City, v. 13 (June, 1935), pp. 154-168.

49. *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 22, Pt. 1, pp. 449, 450. Williams was severely wounded just as his regiment moved into close action, and Lt. Col. John Bowles assumed command. For an eye-witness account of the action, see the Van Horn Ms., Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka; Van Horn commanded Company I of the 1st Colored at Honey Springs.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 450. Losses were reported as follows: Confederate—150 killed, 400 wounded, 77 prisoners; Union—13 killed, 62 wounded. The 1st Colored suffered two men killed in action and 30 wounded.—*Ibid.*, pp. 448-450.

51. *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*, August 12, 1863, quoting letter from Blunt, dated July 25, 1863.

52. *Leavenworth Daily Conservator*, July 17, 1863.

53. *Kansas Regiments*, pp. 424-426.



E. Connelley has called "a famous regiment."<sup>54</sup> Crawford was not the Abolitionist Colonel Williams was; he accepted the colonelcy of this Negro infantry regiment with great reluctance,<sup>55</sup> but he brought to his new command a wealth of intelligence and practical military experience.

Under Crawford the Second Kansas Colored was molded into an efficient fighting unit. He insisted on competent, hard-working officers and required that they "make good in drill, discipline, and military appearance, or hand in their resignations."<sup>56</sup> After assembling by companies at Fort Scott, the regiment began its military career as part of the escort for a supply train to Fort Smith, Ark. Near Fort Smith the men completed their training under the demanding Crawford.<sup>57</sup> Colonel Williams' First Colored was stationed at Fort Smith during part of October and November of 1863;<sup>58</sup> this regiment moved in December to Roseville, Ark., about 50 miles east of Fort Smith, and there went into winter quarters.<sup>59</sup>

In the spring of 1864, both Negro regiments moved south as part of the Frontier division under Brig. Gen. John M. Thayer in the Camden (or Steele) expedition designed to cooperate with the ill-starred Banks expedition up the Red river in Louisiana.<sup>60</sup> This Camden expedition, under command of General Frederick Steele, provided both Kansas Negro regiments with heavy field duty. The First Kansas Colored suffered its greatest losses of the war in the engagement at Poison Springs near Camden on April 18, 1864—117 dead and 65 wounded—when a large foraging party of white and colored troops under Colonel Williams was cut off and cut up by Confederates of Cabell's, Maxey's, and Marmaduke's commands.<sup>61</sup>

54. *A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans*, 4 vols. (New York, 1918), v. 2, p. 898.

55. Samuel J. Crawford, *Kansas in the Sixties* (Chicago, 1911), p. 102. Crawford had served in the 2d Kansas cavalry and was not enthusiastic at the thought of leading infantry; further, he preferred a white organization and did not desire the "months of tedious, hard work, drilling and preparing the regiment for field service."

56. *Ibid.*, p. 107. "As a result . . ." Crawford recorded, "we soon had a number of vacancies."

57. *Kansas Regiments*, pp. 426, 427. ". . ." the regiment attained a degree of proficiency second to none in the Army of the Frontier."

58. "Regimental Letter and Order Book," 79th (New) U. S. Colored troops; the regiment was ordered to Fort Smith on September 14, 1863. While at Fort Smith, Williams used a period of relative freedom from field duty to rebuild his campaign-worn organization; see drill schedule instituted October 25, 1863.

59. *Ibid.*, December 11, 12, 1863. The regiment was ordered to seize and occupy Roseville, collect cotton and other stores in the vicinity, and wage constant war against guerrilla bands in the neighborhood.

60. For reports covering the Camden Expedition, see *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 34, Pt. 1, pp. 653-850, *passim*.

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 743-757. Williams' force of 875 infantry and 285 cavalry included some 500 members of the 1st Kansas Colored; total white Union losses were reported as 87 killed, 32 wounded, *ibid.*, p. 746. Brig. Gen. W. L. Cabell, C. S. A., estimated the Union forces at 1,500 Negroes and 1,000 whites and reported 450 Negroes and 30 whites killed in action with four Negro and 58 white prisoners taken, *ibid.*, p. 792. Cabell's figures for Negro dead and prisoners seem utterly disproportionate to white Union losses.

The engagement was referred to by contemporaries as a massacre, and there is considerable evidence that on this occasion Confederates did murder many Negro soldiers.<sup>62</sup> Crawford's Second Kansas Colored reacted to the Poison Springs affair by resolving to take no rebel prisoners in the future.<sup>63</sup>

Since General Steele's supplies were practically exhausted and his forces inadequate for the task of holding off the combined Confederate armies of Sterling Price and Kirby Smith, Steele decided "to fall back at once."<sup>64</sup> Meanwhile, Gen. Nathaniel Banks had met with disaster on the Red river near Shreveport, and on April 26 the Steele expedition began its withdrawal from Camden.<sup>65</sup>

On April 30, Crawford's command found occasion at Jenkins Ferry on the Sabine river to fight their most distinguished action. The Second Kansas Colored relieved the 50th Indiana which had expended most of its ammunition in a hotly contested rear-guard action. After fighting for two hours without gaining any advantage, the Kansas Negroes found themselves under fire from a rebel battery of three guns. Crawford asked for and got permission to charge this battery with the result that it was quickly overrun by his troops shouting "Remember Poison Spring!" Rebel casualties were high—about 150 killed or mortally wounded; the Second Kansas Colored lost 15 men killed, and 55 were wounded.<sup>66</sup>

The Camden expedition was a costly Union failure, and the Kansas Negro regiments suffered heavily as a result of their heroic part in it; the First was greatly reduced by casualties, and the Second brought back only its weapons and what the men wore on their backs. But the war went on, and there was no rest for either the First or Second. Early in May, 1864, Colonel Williams assumed command of the Second brigade, Frontier division, a brigade made up entirely of Negro regiments.<sup>67</sup> Besides the Kansas regi-

62. Williams flatly stated that "Many wounded men belonging to the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers fell into the hands of the enemy, and I have the most positive assurances from eye-witnesses that they were murdered on the spot."—*Kansas Regiments*, p. 420. Crawford, too, was convinced that many Negro soldiers were "murdered on the field."—*Kansas in the Sixties*, p. 117. Wiley Britton has left a gory picture of Confederates stalking Negro wounded.—*The Civil War on the Border*, v. 2, pp. 290, 291. A clue to the attitude of some trans-Mississippi Confederates toward Negro soldiers is provided by John N. Edwards, a member of Shelby's division, in his description of an engagement at Mark's Mill, Ark., on April 25, 1864: "The battle-field was sickening to behold. No orders, threats, or commands could restrain the men from vengeance on the negroes, and they were piled in great heaps about the wagons, in the tangled brushwood, and upon the muddy and trampled road."—*Shelby and His Men; or, The War in the West* (Cincinnati, 1867), pp. 279, 280. No Kansas Negro troops were engaged at Mark's Mill.

63. *Kansas in the Sixties*, p. 117.

64. *Official Records*, Series 1, v. 34, Pt. 1, p. 668.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 669.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 697-699. See also, Crawford, *Kansas in the Sixties*, pp. 119-124, and *Kansas Regiments*, pp. 428-430.

67. "Regimental Letter and Order Book," 79th (New) U. S. Colored troops, May 7, 1864.

ments, Williams' colored brigade included the 11th U. S. Colored troops, commanded by Lt. Col. James M. Steele, formerly of the 12th Kansas infantry, and the 54th U. S. Colored troops.<sup>68</sup> As members of this brigade and as individual organizations, the two Kansas Negro regiments saw their full share of onerous duty from the spring of 1864 until their final muster-out in October, 1865. They moved from Little Rock to Fort Smith and back, escorting supply and refugee trains; they pursued guerrilla bands and occasionally had the pleasure of hitting them hard and effectively; they went out on foraging and other fatigue parties; they did garrison duty at Fort Smith and Pine Bluff. They were worn down by constant work, by occasional battle casualties, and by disease.<sup>69</sup>

The record of these Negro regiments is a commendable one. They overcame initial prejudice and strong opposition to their military employment. Their soldierly performance of difficult and dangerous duty won the respect and even the admiration of their white comrades in arms. Their losses were high: 177 men were killed in action, 26 died of wounds, disease took over 350 more. The First Kansas Colored lost 156 men killed in action, the highest number of battle casualties of any Kansas regiment, white or colored.<sup>70</sup> The desertion rate for Kansas Negro soldiers was a comparatively good one: 62.201 per thousand. The rate for all Kansas troops was an unusually high 117.54 per thousand, while that for all loyal states was 62.51 per thousand.<sup>71</sup>

Col. C. K. Holliday, Kansas adjutant general, expressed an accurate judgment of the performance of these Negro soldiers in December, 1864, when he wrote:

Though suffering severe losses, and fighting at great disadvantage, owing to the merciless treatment they were sure to receive if taken as prisoners of war, yet they faltered not, but with a steadiness and a gallantry worth[y] of themselves and the cause, have earned an honorable reputation among the defenders of the Union.<sup>72</sup>

68. *Kansas Regiments*, p. 431.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 422, 423, 432-435.

70. *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas . . . 1861-1865*, 2 vols. (Leavenworth, 1867), v. 1, table facing p. XLVIII.

71. *Official Records*, Series 3, v. 5, pp. 668, 669.

72. *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, for the Year 1864* (Leavenworth, 1865), p. 696.

## Recent Additions to the Library

Compiled by HELEN M. MCFARLAND, Librarian

**I**N ORDER that members of the Kansas State Historical Society and others interested in historical study may know the class of books we are receiving, a list is printed annually of the books accessioned in our specialized fields.

These books come to us from three sources, purchase, gift and exchange, and fall into the following classes: Books by Kansans and about Kansas; books on the West, including explorations, overland journeys and personal narratives; genealogy and local history; and books on the Indians of North America, United States history, biography and allied subjects which are classified as general. The out-of-state city directories received by the Historical Society are not included in this compilation.

We also receive regularly the publications of many historical societies by exchange, and subscribe to other historical and genealogical publications which are needed in reference work.

The following is a partial list of books which were added to the library from October 1, 1951, to September 30, 1952. Federal and state official publications and some books of a general nature are not included. The total number of books accessioned appears in the report of the secretary in the February issue of the *Quarterly*.

### KANSAS

*Addresses and Other Items of Interest Connected With the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Services of the Swiss Mennonites Held on September 5, 1949.* No imp. 67p.

ALLEN, J. MORDECAI, *The Roman Soldier*. [Chicago, Harry O. Abbott, c1951.] 27p.

BAKER, NINA (BROWN), *Cyclone in Calico; the Story of Mary Ann Bickerdyke*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1952. 278p.

BRISTOW, JOHN T., *Memory's Storehouse Unlocked, True Stories: Pioneer Days in Wetmore and Northeast Kansas*. Wetmore, n. p., 1948. 411p.

BRISTOW, JOSEPH L., *Fraud and Politics at the Turn of the Century; McKinley and His Administration as Seen by His Principal Patronage Dispenser and Investigator*. New York, The Exposition Press [c1952]. 126p.

BRUMWELL, MALCOLM J., *An Ecological Survey of the Fort Leavenworth Military Reservation*. (Reprinted from *The American Midland Naturalist*, Vol. 45, No. 1, January, 1951.) [44]p.

CAMP, C. ROLLIN, comp. and ed., *First Annual Directory of Fort Scott, for 1875*. . . . Fort Scott, Monitor Steam Publishing House, 1875. 127p.

- COGGINS, CAROLYN, *Successful Entertaining at Home: a Complete Guide for Informal Entertaining*. New York, Prentice-Hall [c1952]. 383p.
- CONFERENCE ON MENNONITE CULTURAL PROBLEMS, *Proceedings 1-8, 1942-1951*. Impr. varies. 8 Vols.
- COUNTY COUNCIL OF WOMEN'S CLUBS, MEADE COUNTY, KANSAS, comps., *Pioneer Stories of Meade County*. [Marceline, Mo., Walsworth Brothers] 1950. 109p.
- [CROOKS, MRS. CHARLES H.], *A Tribute to a Gallant Soldier of the Cross, Doctor Charles H. Crooks, Medical Missionary to Siam, 1904-1940*. No impr. 22p.
- DASHER, ALLEN, *After 45, Candid Observations on Middle Age*. New York, The Exposition Press [c1952]. 141p.
- DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, EMPORIA CHAPTER, *Tombstone Inscriptions, Lyon County, Kansas*. No impr. Typed. 10 Vols.
- DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, KANSAS SOCIETY, *Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Annual State Conference, March 6, 7, and 8, 1952, Hutchinson, Kansas*. No impr. 187p.
- DAVIS, KENNETH SYDNEY, *Morning in Kansas*. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1952. 382p.
- DISASTER CORPS, INC., KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, *Blueprint for Disaster; Kansas City's "Black Friday" Flood, 1951, With the Story of the Fighting Men of Disaster Corps, Inc.* [Kansas City, Mo.] n. p. [c1951]. [41]p.
- DUNCAN, KUNIGUNDE, *Kentish Fire*. Boston, Bruce Humphries, Inc. [c1951]. 36p.
- EATON, FRANK, *Pistol Pete, Veteran of the Old West*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1952. 278p.
- EBRIGHT, HOMER KINGSLEY, *The History of Baker University*. Baldwin, n. p., 1951. 356p.
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## Bypaths of Kansas History

### THIS NAME "KANSAS"

The state and river of Kansas were named for the Kansa or Kaw Indians, a southwestern Siouan tribe, whose home for centuries was in present northeast Kansas. A map by Marquette, about 1673-1674, is one of the earliest to show a village of Kansa Indians in what is now Kansas. John Senex's map of Louisiana territory in 1721 shows the "Great River of Cansez."

The word "Kansas" has been given various meanings, including: South wind people, fire people, swift wind, smoky, swift, or "a troublesome people . . . who continually disturb or harass others"!

Through the years writers have spelled Kansas more than eighty different ways. Among these are: Acansis, Akansa, Akansea, Canceas, Cancez, Canceze, Cancezs, Canchez, Canips, Cans, Cansa, Canses, Cansez, Canzan, Canzas, Canze, Canzes, Canzez, Canzon, Caught, Cauzes, Caw, Chanzas, Ercansaques, Escanjaques, Escansaques, Escanxaques, Esquansaques, Estanxaques, Excanjaque, Excausaquex, Kah, Kamse, Kancas, Kances, Kanees, Kans, Kansa, Kansæ, Kansas, Kansaws, Kanse, Kansea, Kances, Kansez, Kansies, Kansus, Kantha, Kants, Kanzan, Kanzans, Kanzas, Kanze, Kanzeis, Kanzes, Kanzon, Karsa, Karsea, Kasas, Kathagi, Kau, Kaus, Kausas, Kausau, Kauzau, Kaw, Kaws, Kawsa, Kawse, Kawza, Konaz, Kansa, Koneses, Konza, Konzas, Konzo, Kunza, Okames, Okams, Okanis, Quans, Quaus, Ukasa, and Ukasak.

One of the earliest mentions in the newspapers of this area of a proposed Kansas territory was in the *St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette*, January 18, 1854 (no Kansas newspapers were published this early), when it was reported that congress was considering the organization of the large Nebraska territory into three territories, to be named: Cherokee, Kansas, and Nebraska. On February 8, the *Gazette* mentioned Sen. Stephen A. Douglas' substitute bill to divide Nebraska into two territories, Kansas and Nebraska. And this became the Kansas-Nebraska act under which Kansas and Nebraska were organized into separate territories upon the signing of the bill by President Pierce on May 30, 1854.

Kansas City, Mo., when started in 1838, was named Kansas. It officially became the "Town of Kansas" in 1850, the "City of Kansas"



in 1853, and "Kansas City" in 1889. The following reference to the name appeared in the Kansas City (Mo.) *Enterprise*, December 13, 1856:

A MISTAKE.—We are often asked, "Why do you call your city *Kansas*?—it is stealing a name which does not properly belong to you but to the Territory." Such is not the fact. When this city was laid off and named, it was called after the river at whose mouth it is situated, and the immense trade of whose valley it controls. Kansas Territory was then called *Nebraska*, and when it was divided by act of Congress, they stole *our* name. We trust the public will hereafter stand corrected. We are the original and genuine Kansas, and intend so to continue.

The Kansas City (Kan.) Town Co. was formed in 1868. The townsite was surveyed in 1869 and Kansas City, Kan., became a city of the third class in 1872. It and the adjoining old town of Wyandotte and Armourdale were consolidated under the name Kansas City, Kan., in 1886.

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#### IT WAS ALSO A COW THAT STARTED THE CHICAGO FIRE

From the Georgetown (Ky.) *Herald*, August 10, 1854.

"HOW TO CATCH A YANKEE.—A letter from Whitehead, in [Doniphan county] Kansas Territory dated 1st inst., to the New York *Herald*, says:

"The amount of immigration in the way of men and cattle is surprising. Thousands and thousands are pouring in from all portions of the Union, but more especially from Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee. It seems to be a purpose *prepnence* to have it a slave State. There is a story abroad, that at all the ferries over the Missouri River they have a cow tied and a committee to watch all immigrants. The committee ask of each immigrant what animal that is. *If he says 'A Cow' all well—he goes over. But if he answers, 'A keow,' they turn him back.*"

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#### A REAL DIGGER

From the Fort Scott *Democrat*, September 22, 1860.

WHAT INDUSTRY AND PERSEVERANCE CAN ACCOMPLISH.—Mr. John McDonald, living about two miles South-east of town, has just finished the digging of a well on his claim. The well is thirty-two feet deep, mostly through solid rock. Mr. McDonald dug the well himself, and Mrs. McDonald hoisted the stone out of the well with a common pail. It is very tastefully walled up, with a mound of black slate-stone three feet in height around the mouth of the Well which prevents any dirt or surface water from getting into it. Mr. McDonald is fifty-six years of age and his lady is not far short of fifty. We wish them health to enjoy the fruits of their toil.

## FREIGHTING ON THE FRONTIER

From the *Newton Kansan*, February 4, 1875.

IN THE SNOWS NEAR DODGE CITY.—From Mr. J. C. Brooks, of this township, who in company with several others returned home last week Tuesday, we gather a history of how they passed the notorious cold Friday of some three weeks ago. Their company consisted of Mr. Brooks, Ed C. Munger, R. Cook, Chas. Cuthbert, John Long and F. M. Moore, of this county, two men from Cowley county, two from Colorado, one from Fort Dodge, and the balance from Sedgwick county—twenty three in all—who were engaged in hauling Government freight from Dodge City to Camp Supply, about one hundred miles south:

"We left Dodge City on the 7th of January, going via Ft. Dodge, and aiming to drive to a little stream called Hackberry, 12 miles from the Fort Dodge. Having some trouble in crossing the river, we failed to reach Hackberry, and therefore we camped in Seven Mile Hollow. We got our suppers and all prepared beds on the ground except the two Colorado men, who slept in their wagon. About the time we were going to bed it commenced to snow and blow; the storm increased till it was fearful. During the latter part of the night the drifts of snow got so heavy and packed so tight on our heads that some of us began to smother and some to freeze.

Things began to look dangerous. Three or four men from Sedgwick county getting so cold that they could not stand it any longer in their beds, crawled out and climbed into a wagon, with a blanket apiece, leaving their boots and coats fast under the snow, which was so hard that a horse could walk over it without sinking, and the drifts appearing to be from three to seven feet deep. The men that got into the wagon before daylight began to beg for help, but the other men all being fast under the snow could not help them, so they begged in vain. Early in the morning of the 8th, one of the men from Colorado got out of his wagon and helped one of the Cowley county men out from under the snow, and the two went to work in the storm, digging with a spade to get some of us out from under the snow. Finding it so cold that they could not stand it they tried to build a fire, but failed. I told them to dig the snow off my bed, so that I could get out and help them. They then dug me out, finding one of my boots on the bed. I then got out, and said to them, 'a fire we must have or we will all perish.'

By this time nearly all of the men were begging for help; crying that they were freezing to death. We rolled a bale of hay off a wagon, and got some matches by digging a mess box out from under the snow. We then tried to set it afire, but failed, wasting the matches by letting them get wet. I called to the men for more matches, but they could not find any. After a few minutes I happened to think that I had a box of matches in my wagon. I got in and found them all dry; got some hay and an old coat; pulled some cotton baten from it, and then tried to set it, hay, wagon, corn, and all afire. The snow was blowing so bad that it was impossible to set anything afire. I could light the matches, but could not set anything afire, so I gave it up.

I then took a lantern and matches to where I got out of bed, and handed it into the bed to Mr. Corey and the mail carrier from Fort Dodge; they succeeded in lighting it, and the lantern having a piece of the globe broken out, they wrapped a sack around it and handed it to me. I then tried to set the bale of hay afire, and the lantern went out. I threw it down and said to the other two men, that it was the last chance, and that I was freezing. They

stood by the side of a wagon, stamping, with apparently but little strength; I proposed to them to go with me and get into our beds, taking some corn to eat, and save ourselves as long as possible, but they thought they might as well freeze standing as laying, so I went to the bed, crawled in with Long, Mr. Corey and the mail carrier.

We took some barrel staves, set them on end to our backs to hold up the sheet as we set in the huddle together. The wagon sheet over our bed was froze fast under the edges of the wagon sheet, with at least five feet of snow on the edges. I pulled my boots, and had one foot nearly frozen; they sat on my feet and warmed them. I then suggested that if we had something to eat, we could fight one another and live till night, so we called Mr. Corey telling him to bring a bucket of corn for us to eat and get in with us. He brought the corn, but would not get in with us; I asked him if he could go to town; he said he was very cold, and left us, the other men all crying for help, but he said he could not help them. I then said to the mail carrier, 'what can we do?' He said, 'if I had my overcoat I would try to go to town,' but it was froze fast under the edge of the bed where our heads laid. He and I done our best to get it, but failed.

After studying about half an hour we fell on another plan to build a fire—we called the Colorado man to bring a skillet and a piece of pine wood, but finding no skillet he said he could not hunt any longer. I called to him for a bucket, which he brought, and some pine; we whittled some pine kindlings, filling the bucket and then set it afire. By the time it was afire sufficient to start out in the storm we were nearly smothered by the smoke. We crowded it out at a hole just as big as the bucket; Corey and Colorado stuck it to the bale of hay and set it afire. Corey, (the other man's brother) who was still in with us, asked for my boots telling me to warm my feet while he went out and helped them, for fear they would let the fire go out. He put on my boots, and I waited till I got my feet thawed out, and he not coming I asked the mail carrier for his overshoes while I could go and knock a wagon to pieces and build a good fire, and try to save the balance of the men. I put on the shoes and went out and mounted the nearest wagon, which was Mr. Long's, put it on the fire; then we carried Government corn and piled on top.

After this we went to pulling and digging out the men from their beds and taking them to the fire. It being 2 o'clock we had to hurry in order to get through by night. Getting them all out but Charley Cuthbert, some one said that he must be dead, for he had not been heard for two or three hours. Two of us then started out to look for him but could not find him. We came back and all concluded he was dead. In a little while the horses all crowded up between two wagons. Some of the men said that the horses were standing on him, whereupon I went out drove the horses off and took a barrel stave and began digging around for him. Finally finding him I called for help, and Colorado came and we after hard work got him out. Being like the most of us he was unable to walk much.

He being the last, we built another fire, drank a little whisky, eat a little corn, and our conversation turned upon the subject as to who would go to town for help; Mr. Cook and Jesse Corey offered to try providing we would let them have some overcoats. We tied some gunney sacks over their boots and bundled them up the best we could, put them on two good horses, they saying if they could not get help they would come back that night. Colorado, one of the Corey boys, one man from Wichita, who was nearly played out, and I agreed

to fire till morning, the rest of the men not being able to help us. The night thus passed away, and a dreary one it was, too.

In the morning, as the Morning Star made its appearance, we discovered a bright light in the east. Some one said there they come, while some said that's the wrong course, others that they were lost, but everybody said that it was undoubtedly a headlight. I picked up a torch, got up on a drift, and with tears running down my face for joy, waved my light and everybody tried to hollow, but could not, being so hoarse. After watching the light appear and disappear for a long time our hopes were terribly blasted when we discovered it was only the Morning Star shining through the storm. Between that and daylight the wind fell and then we had a fine fire. By this time I had about played out and sat down with the understanding with Colorado that he would keep a fire a while and rouse me to take his place.

The next thing I remember hearing was a sergeant, who rode up and hollowed "How many of you are dead?" Some half a dozen or more answered "not any!" Four or five wagons then made their appearance loaded with wood, etc., for our benefit; a lieutenant then ordered the soldiers to throw a half a cord or more of wood on the fire, after which a surgeon ordered coffee made; about the same time the sergeant ordered the men to dig out our beds, but finding it almost impossible the lieutenant countermanded the order, and instead ordered us placed in the wagons as soon as possible, after which we were wrapped up in almost innumerable blankets, given a drink of hot coffee, and then driven to the Fort on double quick, leaving our camp at about 9 o'clock. The soldiers drove our horses in. We burned two wagons, one wagon bed, all the meat we could get hold of, all the feed troughs, spring seats and several loads of corn.

After getting us to the Fort the officers and soldiers treated us with great kindness, and I can say for one that I shall never forget them for it; also Messrs. Rath and Wright, and in fact all at the Fort. Nearly all of our men were frozen some, but the chill and smoke hurt us more than the freezing. I don't think any will lose limbs from freezing. All from this county are now at home but three. Mr. Munger is still at the hospital but was able to sit up when I last saw him, which was on the 17th of this month. Messrs. Cook and Cuthbert loaded again for Supply. We laid at the Fort nine days, being doctored up so we thought we was able we started for home, arriving at Newton on the 26th ult., poorer than when we left.

So much for freighting on the frontier. My advice to farmers is to attend their farms and let freighting alone. In conclusion we will say that we are very thankful to be at home with our friends once more, even without wagons.

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#### SPRING IN KANSAS, ISN'T IT WONDERFUL?

From the Hugo (Hugoton) *Herald*, February 20, 1886.

Spring has come, gentle Annie, and don't you forget it! The time for spring to come on the calendar has not quite arrived, but in this Italian climate the season of spring kind of forces itself and puts on its linen duster earlier than it did back where the men lived who located the seasons. We know spring has arrived for the housewives are out looking after their lettuce seed planted before the last blizzard, old maids are out looking after their claims and pre-

paring to go barefooted as they did back east, the prairie dogs are out gossiping, and the rattlesnakes and centipedes are bathing themselves in the warm sunshine, preparatory to tickling the legs of the tenderfoot. The old bachelors who went into winter quarters last fall are seen scratching their backs against a friendly wagon wheel or house corner, and from various other signs including the breaking of prairie, the cackling of hens, the lasciviousness of roosters, the energy of homesteaders who have been off their claims for six months or more, and from various other signs, tokens and indications we know that spring is here.

Spring is here and here to stay. Let her stay! We would much rather take a nap in the lap of an early spring than to rustle our neighbor's coal pile to entertain another end of such a winter as we have just passed through. Soon you will see the granger out stabbing his corn into the sod and he will confidently tell you that he expects to gather sixty bushels to the acre (This is a low estimate). He will tell you that this [is] the finest soil he ever stuck a plow into and the easiest cultivated; that this climate is the most delightful he ever lived in; that his wife has her health better out here than she had back east and he expects to send back for his father and his mother-in-law and have them take up claims adjoining his own; that he likes the society better here than he did back in Missouri and that people mind their own business and are not stuck up nor selfish out here. He will tell you that the water is better, the air purer and that sow-belly fried over a buffalo-chip fire tastes better than brandy pudding or peach cobbler did back where he came from. A variety of things he will tell you and if you are a stranger you may be inclined to doubt his statements, but they are truths—gospel truths.

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#### COSTLY HUGGING

From the *Minneapolis Messenger*, December 12, 1895.

The case of a Leavenworth young woman is worthy of serious consideration. During the apple carnival in that city, it appears that hugging was a very pleasant and frequent feature of the affair. A young man named Willie hugged a young woman named Morley, but the report does not say whether he did it as a carnival duty or simply for the fun of the thing. At any rate the embrace resulted in a severe nervous attack for the girl, and she has sued Willie for five thousand dollars damages. He explained to the girl that he hugged several other girls during the carnival without any serious results to their nerves, and that they were able to subdue their nervous attacks, but she was remorseless, and placed the matter into the cold and chilly hands of the law, which is notoriously indifferent to the squeezeful impulses of warm-hearted youth. We have not heard whether the case has been settled or not, but if a girl can obtain five thousand dollars for just one little squeeze, the fortune of a Vanderbilt would not put some men on a sound financial basis. It would be dribbled out in little five thousand dollar dabs. The writer is not personally interested in the matter, but as sure as you live five thousand dollars is too much.

## Kansas History as Published in the Press

Brief biographical sketches of Nelson Case and W. W. Graves appeared in an article by Wayne O'Connell in the *Oswego Democrat*, November 28, 1952. Case came to Oswego in 1869, became a community leader and practiced law for over 50 years. Graves was editor of the *St. Paul Journal* for more than 50 years. Both men made a hobby of local history.

Articles in the December, 1952, number of the *Bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society* included: a biographical sketch of James White Frierson Hughes, by William Macferran, Jr., a continuation of Russell K. Hickman's "First Congregational Church of Topeka"; "Joab Mulvane House," by Lois Johnson Cone; "Washburn and the Lakin Tract"; "Topeka House Numbers—Old Style"; "Col. [J. W. F.] Hughes and the Legislative War," by William Macferran, Jr.; and another installment of George A. Root's "Chronology of Shawnee County."

*The Tiller and Toiler*, Larned, on December 11, 1952, published a 154-page supplement entitled *Progress in Pawnee County*, commemorating the 80th anniversary of the organization of the county. The magazine-size, plastic-bound, enameled-paper volume contains five sections of information on Larned and Pawnee county: historical, agricultural, business and industry, church-school-club, and the veterans' section.

A history of the Daniel A. Bright family, by Mrs. Jessie Bright Grove, a daughter, was published in *The Tiller and Toiler*, Larned, December 19, 1952. Bright arrived in Pawnee county in April, 1872. The biography of this family and the history of Larned and Pawnee county are presented by Mrs. Grove as one story.

The *Dighton Herald* published a history of the Dighton Christian church, December 31, 1952, and notes on the history of Ravanna, February 18, 1953.

"The Shawnee Trail," by Wayne Gard, the story of a cattle trail from Texas to Kansas usually overlooked by historians, was published in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Austin, Tex., January, 1953. From 1850 until the Chisholm trail opened in 1867, the Shawnee trail was the chief route used by the Texas cattlemen to bring their herds north.

Subjects of articles by James A. Clay in recent issues of the *Douglass Tribune* were: Christmas in Douglass in 1879, January 1, 1953, and early baseball activities in Douglass, March 12.

Included in Lillian K. Farrar's column in the *Axtell Standard* recently was "a Doniphan County version" of the pony express by Mrs. Margaret Larzelere Rice, Troy, published January 8, 15, and 22, 1953.

The early history of Belleville, by Virginia Watson, was printed in the *Belleville Telescope*, January 8, 1953. The town was incorporated January 10, 1878, about eight years after the first resident arrived. The *Telescope*, March 5, published a brief history of Fort Lookout.

Historical articles of interest to Kansans appearing in recent issues of the *Kansas City (Mo.) Star* included: "Abilene's Heroes of Cowntown Days Give Place to Outstanding Sons of This Era," by Vivian Aten Long, January 15, 1953; "Frances Willard Changed Ed Howe's Mind When She Spoke for Temperance," by Charles Arthur Hawley, February 26; "Tornado Hits With Mighty Blow but Usually You Get a Warning," a review of Snowden D. Flora's *Tornadoes of the United States*, by Paul V. Miner, March 15; "Indians of Kansas Along With Others Hope for Riches From Old Land Claims," by H. E. Bruce, March 17; and "'Big Charlie' Crocker Learned to Be a Leader in His Trip Across Plains," by John Edward Hicks, March 19. Among historical articles in the *Kansas City (Mo.) Times* were: "Adventurer and Pioneer, George Park Led in the Founding of Two Colleges [Kansas State and Park]," by W. F. Sanders, February 23, 1953; "Gold of Forty-Niners and Silver From Santa Fe Buried on the Kansas Plains," by E. B. Dykes Beachy, March 9; and "Tauy Jones, Benefactor of Indians, Recalled in Claim Filed by Ottawas," by Charles Arthur Hawley, March 31.

Relics in the museum of A. H. Shutte, Ellis, were described in an article in the *Hays Daily News*, January 18, 1953. Mr. Shutte came to Ellis county 72 years ago and has collected many objects illustrative of Kansas history.

Recent historical articles in the *Dodge City Daily Globe* included: "Inaugural Recalls Satin-Lined 'Twenty-Million-Dollar' Chapter in Dodge City History," a brief story of the Dodge City Cowboy Band, by Hoover Cott, January 19, 1953; the history of the Dodge City Atheneum Club organized 50 years ago, January 31; and the

reminiscences of the late Mrs. Sallie DeArmond Sweet who came to western Kansas in 1885, March 5.

Publication by installments of John Luke Gehman's autobiographical sketch began in the January 22, 1953, issue of *The Modern Light*, Columbus. Also the *Light* has continued regular publication of the historical column "Do You Remember When?"

John Watson's "See Kansas" series in the *Wichita Evening Eagle* has continued to appear in recent months. Among the articles were: "Man-Made Cement 'Garden of Eden [at Lucas],' Startles Imagination With Life-Like Figure Displays," January 22, 1953; "St. Fidelis, 'Cathedral of the Plains [at Victoria],' Stands as Monument to Enduring Faith of a Kansas People," February 5; "Two Quaint Dutch Windmills in Kansas [Wamego and Smith Center] Monuments to Pioneer Industry," February 12; "'Home on the Range' Stands Near Smith Center," February 26; and "Geographic Center of United States Located Near Lebanon," March 12.

On January 26, 1953, the first weekly installment of the diary of John S. Gilmore, Sr., was published in the *Wilson County Citizen*, Fredonia. The diary begins in July, 1867, when the writer was 19 years old and working in a newspaper office in Burlington. Gilmore established the *Citizen* in 1870.

The question of who was Marshall county's first settler, A. G. Woodward or F. J. Marshall, was discussed in Marysville newspapers in recent months. George Hamburg's talk before the Rotary club of Marysville on the subject was printed in the *Marshall County News*, Marysville, January 29, 1953. Letters were published in the *Marysville Advocate*, from W. E. Stewart, Vermillion, March 5, and from Otto J. Wullschleger, Frankfort, March 12.

Settlers began arriving in Jewell county in the early 1870's, according to a history of the Jewell area written by Mrs. H. E. Hutchcraft in 1927 and published in the *Jewell County Republican*, Jewell, January 29, 1953. The town of Jewell was first Fort Jewell, the fortifications having been built by a home guard organization, with W. D. Street as captain, in 1870.

A brief article about the admission of Kansas into the Union, by Ruby Basye, appeared in the *Pratt Daily Tribune*, January 29, 1953.

A history of the events preceding the erection in 1901 of the old Lyon county courthouse, now being razed, was published in the



*Emporia Gazette*, February 4, 1953. It was prepared by the late Harry E. Peach, then county clerk, and was found in the cornerstone of the building.

The first of a series of articles on the history of Natoma, by the Rev. George Lee, appeared in the *Natoma Independent*, February 5, 1953. Natoma was established as a railroad town in 1888.

Two series of historical features have recently appeared in the *Cunningham Clipper*. One is "Cunningham's Family Album," consisting of pictures of early Cunningham and residents of the area. The other is entitled "Echoes of the Past." One of the articles in that group was on the tornado which struck Cunningham in May, 1898, appearing in the issues of February 13, 20, 27, and March 6, 1953. The story of the celebration in 1888 of the coming of the railroad to Cunningham was printed March 13.

Six eight-page sections made up the Kansas State College anniversary edition of the *Manhattan Mercury-Chronicle*, February 15, 1953. Established in 1863, Kansas State was the first land grant college in the United States.

A column-length article on the cholera epidemic in the Ellsworth area in 1867 was printed in the *Junction City Union*, February 17, 1953.

The *Coffeyville Daily Journal* published its second annual progress edition February 22, 1953. The largest edition ever published in Coffeyville, 140 pages, it was devoted to the history, building progress, schools, churches, agriculture, and sports of the community. Also included was a biography of Walter Perry Johnson, by many considered the greatest baseball pitcher, whose home was in Coffeyville.

On February 23 the *Winfield Daily Courier* published its 1953 achievement edition. This year, which marks the 80th anniversary of the incorporation of Winfield and the 80th year of the *Courier*, 148 pages of city and county history and progress were published.

The *Beloit Daily Call*, February 26, 1953, published a three-column history of Waconda, "dead" town of Mitchell county. Apparently established in 1871, Waconda was abandoned early in the 1880's.

A brief history of Doniphan, by T. E. Garvey, appeared in the Atchison *Daily Globe*, March 5, 1953. James F. Forman, who owned the townsite, is considered the father of the town. The town company was organized November 11, 1854.

On March 12, 1953, *The Leader-Courier*, Kingman, printed a short history of the Waterloo Presbyterian church, Kingman, county. The first meeting for organization of the church was on February 25, 1878, at the home of J. C. Endicott. It is believed to be the first church organized in Kingman county.

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## Kansas Historical Notes

All officers of the Northeast Kansas Historical Society were re-elected at a recent meeting at the C. C. Webb home in Highland. They are: Mrs. C. C. Webb, president; Fenn Ward, vice-president; Mrs. Fenn Ward, secretary; and C. C. Webb, finance director. The society operates the Sac and Fox Indian mission which was visited by over 2,400 persons during the past year.

The annual meeting of the Augusta Historical Society was held January 12, 1953, with the president, Stella B. Haines, presiding. Other officers of the society are: Mrs. J. E. Mahannah, vice-president; Florence Hudson, secretary; and Mrs. Henry Bornholdt, treasurer. The secretary reported that 800 visitors had registered during the past year at the museum maintained by the society.

Maurice E. Fager, Topeka, and Mrs. David McCreath, Lawrence, were elected presidents of the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas at the organization's 35th annual meeting in Topeka, January 28, 1953. Other officers elected by the Native Sons were: Rolla A. Clymer, El Dorado, vice-president; G. Clay Baker, Topeka, secretary; and John W. Brookens, Westmoreland, treasurer. The Native Daughters named Mrs. Ethel Godin, Wamego, vice-president; Mrs. Ivan Dayton Jones, Lyons, secretary; and Mrs. James B. McKay, El Dorado, treasurer. W. S. Rupe, Ames, Iowa, publisher, was the principal speaker at the evening meeting. The Capper award for the winner of the collegiate speech contest went to F. L. Baird, Newton, and was presented by Henry S. Blake. Retiring presidents were: C. W. Porterfield, Holton, and Mrs. Ray Pierson, Burlington.

The 46th annual meeting of the Woman's Kansas Day Club was held in Topeka, January 29, 1953, with the president, Mrs. W. M. Ehrsam, Wichita, presiding. At the business session Mrs. Douglas McCrum, Fort Scott, was elected president. Other officers elected include: Mrs. Earl C. Moses, Great Bend, first vice-president; Mrs. E. Claude Smith, Topeka, second vice-president; Mrs. J. L. Jenson, Colby, recording secretary; Mrs. Jessie Clyde Fisher, Wichita, treasurer; Mrs. C. W. Spencer, Sedan, historian; Mrs. J. U. Massey, Pittsburg, auditor; and Mrs. F. J. Rost, Topeka, registrar. Directors elected were: Mrs. George Rathbun, Manhattan, first district; Mrs. Clyde Swender, Blue Mound, second district; Mrs. William Groundwater, Longton, third district; Mrs. Paul H. Wedin, Wichita, fourth

district; Mrs. Will Townsley, Jr., Great Bend, fifth district; and Dr. Mary Glasson, Phillipsburg, sixth district. This year's theme was "Early Day Transportation in Kansas." Interesting reports, given by the district directors and historians, were presented to the Kansas State Historical Society. Pictures, museum articles, and books were also given.

Dr. Elizabeth Cochran, Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, told of her recent trip through Europe at a meeting of the Crawford County Historical Society in Pittsburg, February 5, 1953. Another feature of the meeting was a quiz on the history of Crawford county and Kansas. Prof. L. E. Curfman is president of the society.

Guy Norris, long-time resident of Garden City, was the principal speaker at the annual meeting of the Finney County Historical Society, February 10, 1953, in Garden City. Directors chosen at the business session were: Gus Norton, J. E. Greathouse, William Fant, Albert Drussel, Mrs. Charles Brown, Mrs. Kate Smith, Mrs. Ella Condra, Chet Reeve, Mrs. Louis Kampschroeder, Frederick Finnup, Guy Norris, and Mrs. C. C. Wristen. Norton is president of the society.

Gov. Edward F. Arn's advisory committee for the observance of Kansas' territorial centennial in 1954, noted in the February, 1953, *Quarterly*, reported their recommendations to the governor on February 18, 1953. The plans were approved by Governor Arn, an appropriation of \$10,000 was granted and all the members of the committee were reappointed to the Kansas Territorial Centennial committee and instructed to put the plans into operation. Additional members on this committee are: Mrs. Orvill Burtis, Manhattan; Everett E. Erhart, Stafford; Mrs. Frank Haucke, Florence; Bliss Isley, Wichita; Tom Lillard, Topeka; Father Cuthbert McDonald, Atchison; Larry Miller, Topeka; Mrs. H. N. Moses, Salina; Dolph Simons, Lawrence; Fred Stein, Atchison; the Rev. Milton Vogel, Topeka; Vivian Woody, Douglass; C. O. Wright, Topeka; L. D. Wooster, Hays; Ted L. Sexton, Leavenworth, and Don McNeal, Council Grove. Dr. Robert Taft, Lawrence, is committee chairman.

A bronze plaque has been placed on the California camp site where the 20th Kansas regiment of Volunteer infantry stayed when en route to Manila in 1898. The project was sponsored by the California Historical Society but the plaque was provided by members of the regiment now living in California. Unveiling ceremonies

were held February 27, 1953, with Col. Clay Anderson, Burlingame, Cal., in charge of arrangements.

Ralph B. Harrison was named president of the Bourbon County Historical Society at a meeting in Fort Scott, March 3, 1953. Other officers elected were: Mrs. J. R. Prichard, vice-president; Mrs. G. D. Cleland, secretary; and D. V. Swartz, treasurer. Mrs. Effie Peete, custodian, reported that more than 6,000 people had visited the museum during 1952.

Owen McEwen was elected president of the Wichita Historical Museum Association at the annual meeting March 19, 1953. Other officers chosen were: Eugene Coombs, first vice-president; Carl Bitting, second vice-president; John Coultis, secretary; and C. K. Foote, treasurer. Elected to the board of directors of the association were: Coombs, Bitting, R. T. Aitchison, Mrs. C. H. Armstrong, Omrah Aley, John P. Davidson, Mrs. W. C. Coleman, Bertha V. Gardner, and M. C. Naftzer. Allen W. Hinkel was the featured speaker at the meeting. Hugh D. Lester was the retiring president.

Alden O. Weber was re-elected president of the Osawatomie Historical Society at a meeting March 27, 1953. Other officers re-elected were: Pauline Gudger, vice-president; and Ruby McIntosh, secretary-treasurer. The society is working on the restoration of the Old Stone church in Osawatomie, which dates back to 1859, and was first served by the Rev. Samuel L. Adair, John Brown's brother-in-law.

A historical marker commemorating the arrival of the Mennonite pioneers in the vicinity of Great Bend in 1874 has been erected one mile east of Dundee on Highway 50N. An exact model of the original church building is on top of the marker. An inscription on the bronze plate dedicates the marker to the memory of the Mennonite forefathers who migrated from Karlsualda, Russia.

The journal and diaries of George C. Sibley and others, pertaining to the surveying and marking of a road from the Missouri frontier to New Mexico, 1825-1827, have been edited by Kate L. Gregg and recently published in a 280-page volume by the University of New Mexico Press under the title *The Road to Santa Fe*.

*On Freedom's Altar* is the title of a 195-page book by Hazel Catherine Wolf on the Abolition movement of pre-Civil War days, published recently by the University of Wisconsin Press.

Dr. Robert Taft's series, "The Pictorial Record of the Old West," which began appearing in the *Quarterly* in 1946, has been revised and recently published in a 400-page volume entitled *Artists and Illustrators of the Old West: 1850-1900* (New York, 1953). "In this book there have been retold the actual experiences of a number of artists and illustrators, most of whom personally witnessed some part of the marvelous transformation of the region beyond the Mississippi. . . ." A 72-page picture section includes examples from the work of many of the artists. Dr. Taft is a member of the faculty of Kansas University and president of the Kansas State Historical Society.

*Broadax and Bayonet*, the story of the part played by the United States army in the development of the Northwest, 1815 to 1860, a 263-page book by Francis Paul Prucha, was recently published by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. This volume deals with the army's non-military role on the frontier, such as law enforcement, the building of roads and forts, its contributions in the fields of science and social development, and the economic effect of its presence.

The reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, freighter and cowboy in Kansas, the Indian territory, and Texas, 1878 to 1893, have been edited by Dr. Angie Debo and recently published in a 343-page volume entitled *The Cowman's Southwest* (Glendale, Cal., 1953).

*Tornadoes of the United States* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1953), by Snowden D. Flora, is a 194-page book designed to provide information on the frequency, damage, causes, and methods of forecasting tornadoes, and ways of saving human lives when the storms strike. The author was head of the United States Weather Bureau at Topeka from 1917 to 1949.



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